



NOW THEN.

ANDY BROWN. DALJIT NAGRA. MOGWAI. ISSUE 43. FREE.
AN OFF THE SHELF FESTIVAL SPECIAL.

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NOW THEN IS A FREE MONTHLY MAGAZINE FOR PEOPLE IN SHEFFIELD.

We aim to cultivate choice, voice and responsibility by providing a platform for independent art, trade, music, writing and local news. We support Sheffield's economy by only working with independent traders, community groups, charities and local government.

Almost all articles published in this magazine are written by members of the community, not professionals. If you don't like what you read or have something that needs to be said, get in touch. Your opinions make Now Then what it is.

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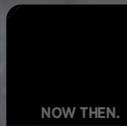
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Enjoy the read.

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EDITORIAL.

We've finally taken the plunge and done our first landscape magazine, and we couldn't think of a more suitable candidate for featured artist than Andy Brown, a local photographer with a good eye and a hugely varied back catalogue of images. Particularly worth perusing are his shots of the residents of Park Hill and his Peak District collection.

This month's magazine is a special issue celebrating Off the Shelf Festival of Writing and Reading, which takes place across Sheffield between 8th and 29th of this month. Turn to page 28 for our pick of the scheduled events. You can also find interviews with poet Daljit Nagra and climate change expert Mike Hulme on pages 22 and 30 respectively, while this month's Wordlife includes poems from Wendy Cope, Daljit Nagra and Joe Dunthorne.

Our food page is themed around Indian cuisine and our music interview is with Glaswegian instrumental rock band Mogwai. There are various other topics covered elsewhere, including a piece on the UK Uncut movement.

Get in touch with me at
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SAM.

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LOCALCHECK.

GOING FORWARD.

HOSTED BY ALT-SHEFF.

Around the end of the 1990s I first heard a new phrase in a particularly memorable meeting. You will have heard it. In the circumstances it seemed very calculated, sinister wording. The occasion was a visit to Sheffield of the Financial Services Authority (FSA) and the phrase was 'going forward'.

This impressive roadshow of Oxbridge educated 'top people' ventured outside London to influence credit unions. At that time there were hundreds of small credit unions run by local committees, but an unstoppable movement had swept across from America insisting that these neighbourhood organisations weren't sustainable. They had to merge, to grow and to be regulated under the FSA along with banks and other financial corporations.

It felt sinister that they kept saying 'going forward' like a mantra, like some catchy pop lyric they couldn't get out of their heads. It was that era when accountants were taking over everything, including the health service. It forecast a new future, implying that anyone resisting would by definition be 'going backwards'. It had the same meaninglessly unarguable force of concepts like 'progress' or 'improvement'. Who could stand up for non-progress or non-improvement? It felt like a kind of code for that which will happen, regardless of public opinion. People who've been to the same conferences, the same schools, are being tipped off. Don't argue with this one. We're going forward - like it or not.

A quick look around the internet revealed this phrase in some intriguing places locally. As Sheffield City Council 'transitioned' its ICT services away from the public sector to the Capita corporation, the Director of Corporate Resources talked of 'the transformation of our services going forward'. The Sheffield Forgemasters CEO, keen to be in the nuclear manufacturing industry, said that having worked with government advisers and private equity their business was going forward.

Then I came across a report for the Sheffield Leadership Summit 2010: 'Sheffield Going Forward: Another Great Ten Years?' This used 'scenario modelling' from the strictly establishment consultancy Oxford Economics to show how the city would fit in with the new coalition government's priorities - items like 25-30% cuts, national security, the 'Big Society' and business as the driver for economic growth. "Constant revolutionizing of production, uninterrupted disturbance of all social conditions, everlasting uncertainty and agitation ... All that is solid melts into air". Oops! This last quote is capitalism described in The Communist Manifesto by Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels. Sound familiar? They were writing in an earlier age of 'Free Trade' where no doubt the top people were lapping it up, singing the 19th century equivalent of 'We Are The Champions'. Fortunes were made and lost, people were overworked and the world slid into the Great Depression, the rise of fascism and total world war... going forward.

Why do we have to follow the same path again? Onwards into obesity? Ever-increasing wealth for the rich despite poverty in the developing world? Unhealthy high-tech lifestyles cramped over computers or production lines? Traffic and pollution growing exponentially? Crises and cuts of basic services like health and education - things that for one golden post-war moment made life feel secure?

Can't we talk about 'going backwards'? To organic farming that kept us going for thousands of years without draining nitrates into our rivers or depending on fossil fuels? Slow food, cooked and eaten over decent meal breaks with friends, beats fast-food greaseburgers. If going forward means a minimum wage, maximum exploitation drudge job with bullying management, I want to go back.

If you want to join me, come to Sheffield Social Centre's Really Free School on 15th October to learn and share basic, real-world skills and ideas. Or join Friends of the Earth's campaign against the government's planning law rip-up. Or Sheffield Save Our NHS. I could go on and on. There are plenty of people resisting the going forward lie. Check out Alt-Sheff every week for actions and talks. Don't believe the hype.

sheffieldsocialcentre.org.uk
sheffieldfoe.co.uk
sheffieldsaveournhs.co.uk
alt-sheff.org.uk



DIGITAL REGION.

THE NET IN SOUTH YORKSHIRE.

NEIL HART.

South Yorkshire is unique in a number of ways, but you know all about them already (Wikipedia is there if you're struggling to think past Jessica Ennis.) I want to talk about something that genuinely marks us out as UK leaders in a field other than a big bloody green one - we have the most advanced and widespread fibre optic broadband network in the country, and BT and Virgin don't own it. Perhaps you didn't even know the Digital Region network was here, but either way it's tremendously exciting and could mean great things for the area.

It is funded by all the councils in South Yorkshire, the European Union and the soon-to-be-defunct Yorkshire Forward, so it's for us, not for an international corporate entity to charge through the arse for. Secondly, it means local businesses get a lift and good old locals like you and me get internet access like in the films. Up to 40meg to be precise. You know the bit where the hero has to download something before the bad guy walks in? Thanks to Digital Region, our plucky Yorkshire hero downloads it just in time, leaving the southern villain to cry into his cockles.

"Ah!" I hear you say, "I've heard this 'Up to' codswallop before. Apparently I've got up to 20meg and I get nowhere near that!" Fair point, but the problem thus far has been that without fibre optics the signal has to travel for miles down some old cables and by the time it gets to the cabinet on your street it has degraded quite a bit. When it makes the short hop to your house, there's often not much left.

Imagine ordering a massive trifle from the other side of the city. The delivery driver straps it to the roof of his car and drives like a maniac. By the time he gets to your house there's not much more than a scrap of cream left, but he still wants paying. That's not a scientific explanation, but you get my point.

With Digital Region, the signal is transmitted through fibre optics all the way to the brand new cabinets on our pavements. This means less degradation of the signal, so all it has to do is hop to your house. Hence when Digital Region service providers say "up to 40meg", all they're really saying is that the distance from the cabinet to your house will lose you a bit of signal.

By 2014, 97% of our county will be covered, and new areas are going live every week. All you have to do is pick an ISP* and check if your postcode is live. Nothing is set in stone, but if enough people and businesses take up the service it will probably roll out all over the place. You could soon have somewhere in the region of a billion windows all open at the same time streaming Transformers 2* without slowing down. It's just for us in South Yorks, it's the biggest network in the country and it will hopefully make a big difference to the way we use the internet.

Basically, this is a long and complicated way of saying: Finally! The broadband they always promised us!

The popular T's & C's bit:

- * Journalistic admission! I work for Origin Broadband, an ISP on the Digital Region network. I'm not here to talk about us though; just what the network means to us here in South Yorkshire and how good I think it is.
- * Transformers 2 is dogger so don't bother. If you do, please use a legal service and that.

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WORK EXPERIENCE.

FROM THE BUBBLE OF EDUCATION TO THE BATHTUB OF EMPLOYMENT.

ADAM KAY.

Work experience students are an easy target. Baggy-shirted and spotty-faced, they quickly become the butt of many an office joke. They bound through the door, Monday morning, 9am, eagerly shaking hands, anticipating an endless list of important tasks to be performed. Watch that enthusiasm fade around 9.15 when they are assigned a more humble role: Head Tea Maker.

It's tempting to dismiss work experience as pointless – a source of equal irritation for both the already-busy employees, who now have to find extra jobs for the student, and for the student who, if they're being honest, would probably rather be at home playing Xbox. But pointless it most certainly is not. In these straitened times, where jobs are scarce and degree qualifications are as common as Kerry Katona, work experience is the best way to brighten up a dull CV.

Perhaps the best thing about work experience is that it does exactly what it says on the tin. Without it, it would be entirely possible to spend the years between the ages of 5 and 21 simply hopping from classroom to classroom – from school, to college, to university – without ever truly sampling the real world. Work experience helps with the transition from the bubble of education to the bathtub of employment – a place where paper is for printing on rather than making aeroplanes with, where it's no longer acceptable to answer the phone with the phrase "Easy mate, how's it going?"

For many students, an internship* will be the first time they've ever set foot in an office, and so the first time they've ever witnessed one of the more fascinating facets of human behaviour: office politics. It's a strange governmental system which makes Homo sapiens regress to the state of grumpy, gossipy, caffeine-addicted apes. Where else but in an office could you see grown men sulk because they stepped in a puddle on their way to work and ruined their new tan brogues? Where else could you develop such exacting taste in coffee that you can accurately tell the difference between Nicaraguan and Brazilian? Where else could you discover that Horny Alice gave the boss a drunken lap dance at the Christmas do?

(*Note: 'Internship' is one of those dreadful American words which somehow managed to find its way into the British lexicon. Let's put a stop to this now please, before we all start driving on freeways, turning things counter-clockwise and cheering for Sheffield Wednesday Soccer Club.)

Of course, work experience isn't always a bed of roses. Students should expect to be taken out of their comfort zones, but sometimes they're unprepared for just how far removed they become. This writer recently completed a week-long placement at a local newspaper, where he was told about his predecessor, who had a crippling fear of dogs. His first assignment? Interview a police dog trainer... and his vicious furry companion. That's irony on an Alanis Morissette level.

At the other end of the scale is the most tedious aspect of work experience – 'shadowing'. This may sound like some exciting ninja activity, but disappointingly it just means staring over somebody's shoulder while they do their work. Admittedly this would be a brilliant thing to do if your placement was with, say, the Moscow State Circus – at a recruitment agency in Broomhill, not so much.

It's worth noting that the types of work experience available vary by profession. Marketing and advertising students are often offered year-long paid placements, earning salaries of around £14,000 – definitely not to be sniffed at. For those looking to work in areas such as politics and the media, anything longer than a week is rare, and the chances of receiving any form of reimbursement are slimmer than a Hollywood swimwear model. It's easy to be put off by this, particularly if you have to shell out for things like train fares just to get to your placement. But it's important to remember the reasons for doing work experience in the first place – namely to improve your employment prospects and prevent you from ending up on The Jeremy Kyle Show.

Securing a placement can be a struggle at times, especially in our current state of economic doom and gloom. If you're planning on applying, be prepared to face rejection. It is, after all, a competitive world out there. But if and when you do score some work experience, make sure you make the most of it. A little effort goes a long way, and even if you don't have a job offer at the end of your placement, at least you'll have gained some new employment-friendly skills. For one thing, you'll have learned how to make a proper cuppa.



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BOOKS.

THE 3RD SHEFFIELD INTERNATIONAL ARTIST'S BOOK PRIZE EXHIBITION.

JOHN CLARK.

A book cast in glass, a book carved from wood, books made from plastic and mirrors, delicate books of hand-made paper, a book in a matchbox, even a book made of pillows; these are a few of the offerings on show in the third edition of The Sheffield International Artist's Book Prize, held in conjunction with Off The Shelf and running throughout the festival at Bank Street Arts in the city centre.

The prize started life as a way of showcasing artists' books and one that would fit with Bank Street Arts' aims of innovation and inclusivity. The idea of a competition was borne out of conversations with book artists at the Leeds Artist's Book Fair in 2008. Whilst there was no artist's book prize in the UK at the time, the aim was to do much more than simply run a competition. Rather, the prize was the context for encouraging the public to view the books on display and spend time with the exhibits. So the decision was taken to make the books accessible, available to be handled and read, with the visiting public being asked and encouraged to act as the arbiters and judges of the prize.

To encourage involvement, all book submissions were shown in the inaugural exhibition in 2008 and the free entry policy was established. The first Sheffield Artist's Book Prize in 2008 attracted nearly 50 entries from all over the world and several hundred people cast votes for their favourite. In 2009 additional prizes were added to broaden the scope. The Main Prize was retained to ensure that link between visitors and exhibits, but to that was added a Student Prize and Special Jury Prize, encouraging a greater range of artists to submit and leading to more follow-up exhibitions. The 2009 Prize attracted nearly 80 entries with many more visitors to the subsequent exhibition. It was decided that a biennial event would allow more time to prepare the competition and cope with the administration involved while retaining the policy of free admission.

This year's competition was launched in early spring and by close of submissions at the end of July we had received 172 entries from 22 different countries, including over 40 entries for the Student Prize alone.

Books have been submitted from as far apart as Brazil, Japan, Australia, Canada, Argentina and Korea. The range of submissions is equally diverse: from hand-etched plates illustrating unusual narratives to weird and wonderful fold-out offerings; books no more than an inch square to one that extends maybe forty feet long (we're not sure yet as we haven't found a room long enough to open it in); manipulated books made by delicately cutting and reforming old editions to complex conceptual conceits; books in boxes, books in envelopes and a book made of silk in an egg.

Visitors to the exhibition will once again get a chance to view and handle all books submitted and vote for their favourite, with the winner of the Main Prize again being decided by visitors to the show. This is a unique chance to view the tremendous diversity, creativity and inventiveness of book art, a genre which is all too seldom shown in exhibitions, and to pit your wits against the judges of this year's Jury Prize - Sarah Bodman from the Centre for Fine Print Research at the University of the West of England and Maria White of Tate Library in London.

It was an unenviable task selecting one winner from the 170 submissions and it has been an equally difficult task working out how best to show the books to their advantage for ease of reference and viewing. We hope as many visitors as possible will find time to visit this fascinating show and take on the challenge of selecting a winner, as well as feasting their eyes on the fantastic array of entries on offer.

Exhibition dates: 11th October - 5th November 2011.

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UNCUTTING.

A PERSONAL CHOICE.
MICK IBBOTSON.

There has been much written in the right-wing media about UK Uncut and people who participate in their events. They have been tagged as terrorists, likened to al Qaeda and the IRA at various times, but the truth is more worrying for the powers that be.

As a form of protest, ‘uncutting’ is unique, unpredictable and entertaining. In Sheffield we have a growing uncutting scene, bringing in people from right across the political spectrum, all of them linked by one theme - the unfairness of the current system. We’ve turned banks and stores into classrooms, into public libraries and hospital wards. Anything is possible if you put your mind to it.

The current financial situation faced by the country and the wider world is a real issue, but the government’s plan to make the poor pay and allow the rich to avoid paying is a fundamental flaw. My personal opinion is that they are using the need for ‘austerity’ as a justification and in some cases magnifying and reinforcing the inequalities in our society. George Osborne says “We’re all in it together”, but it’s clear that some of us are more in it than others.

Uncut is a fluid organisation. It has no leaders, no followers and no direct political affiliations, which makes it impossible for the authorities to clamp down on it. As an entity, Uncut exists because people believe in it - believe that the current unfairness should not be allowed to continue and seek to raise awareness of this. Its mission is to expose the wrongdoings of private companies in the UK and beyond and apply pressure to encourage them to mend their ways. It could be a long, drawn-out campaign. They have been allowed to get away with it for too long with the appeasement and co-operation of politicians and the media. The recent high-profile action at Fortnum and Mason in London and the outrageous reaction of the police and its high-profile Tory Party customers shows that Uncut is beginning to rattle the cages of the ruling classes.

There is nothing like the feeling of empowerment and liberation when, after sneaking into a target shop like some sort of retail undercover agent, you reveal yourself to the fellow shoppers, Uncutters and store staff. The more visual the display, the better. I suppose it’s become a bit of a hobby. Some people go to football, some go to the pub. I prefer to protest against tax avoidance on the high street. Each to their own.

Uncutting has only really been around since last autumn. We’ve had some great successes against some of the leading high street culprits, but this comes at a price - your face gets known and thus makes the challenge even greater. After all, it is a game of cat-and-mouse and the more shops attempt to stifle protest, the more determined we are to get the job done. The police were often a bit heavy-handed early on, but now they’ve mellowed. Perhaps individually they think we might be right but are reluctant to admit it publicly. They probably found it difficult to justify using riot shields against a group of carol singers.

Some people think I’m mad and that we will not make a difference - my wife included - but people shouldn’t judge until they’ve tried it. It is weirdly addictive and if it makes one company modify its tax responsibility for the good, it has been worth it.

I asked other uncutters why they did it and the answers were quite similar. The unfairness of the system, the need to do something about it and the excitement of protest all featured highly. At the end of the day these protests are peaceful, if sometimes a little rowdy. They are a form of visual performance art with a hard-hitting message underneath. They are family-friendly; we often get kids in prams and the older generations actively participating. No one is forced into doing anything they don’t feel comfortable with and we support people to take that initial plunge. Some choose to simply stand alongside and passively support what is going on. That is fine too.

We’re not vindictive or offensive, and when asked to leave stores and other venues we do so, normally to continue our protest outside. The fact that some shops choose to close as a result (or in anticipation) of our protests is a testament to their guilt. When the lights go off and the doors are closed, however temporarily, it is a sign that our message is getting through. Even the most stubborn and reluctant businesses will eventually do the right thing. That’s all we want.

One fellow uncutter said:

“The crunch moment for me came when I heard that Bob Diamond, CEO of Barclays, had received around £7 million in bonuses and the bank had paid less than 4% tax on its profits, despite its huge role in the economic crisis. It just summed up the situation we have now so clearly. That very morning I logged on and saw that there was some action taking place in Sheffield and I went down to Barclays in town. I don’t want the current situation, or worse, to exist for future generations.”

A good point.

Uncutting is getting bigger all the time and as fresh targets are uncovered the range of activities increases accordingly. Hopefully in the future, the government will clamp down on opportunities for organisations to avoid paying tax at the correct rate. It makes no sense. HMRC claim we need to make savings to reduce the debt (which I actually agree with), then at the same time allow companies to avoid paying into the UK coffers, money which could help clear the debt and allow services to be protected. The solution seems simple, so why don’t they just do it?

Search for ‘Sheffield Uncut’ on Facebook for local events and ‘Ukuncut’ for national events.

ukuncut.org.uk



FOOD.

IN SEARCH OF A 'REAL' CURRY...

CASSIE KILL.

Robin Cook once said that Chicken Tikka Masala was Britain's new national dish.

Certainly, Indian food has become an immensely popular aspect of British culture. But how has this happened, what does it tell us about how we relate to other cultures and is there really such a thing as 'authentic' Indian cuisine anyway?

Indian food first came to the UK as early as the 17th century. Bengali seamen (or 'lascars') were at work on the trading ships of the East India Company from the early 1600s onwards, bringing with them the spices and techniques of their native cuisine. Over time, the increasing influence of Britain in India meant that many traders returned from South Asia with Indian servants and a taste for Indian flavours.

The first commercial curry powder in Britain was introduced in London in 1780, with the first Indian restaurant opening around 1809. The Hindoostanee Coffee House was run by Mr Dean Mahomet. He had come to London from Bihar, India, via Cork, Ireland and according to an advertisement, he hoped to offer a place "for the Nobility and Gentry where they might enjoy the Hookha with real Chilm tobacco and Indian dishes of the highest perfection". Unfortunately, he went out of business just three years later as many wealthy people preferred to eat at home due to having their own chef.

Queen Victoria helped make curry fashionable in the mid-1800s, eating it regularly at home. There was a dip in the popularity of Indian food in the early 19th century, but it saw a strong resurgence from the 1940s with increased immigration. Many South Asians took over bombed-out takeaways in the post-war era, serving curry alongside traditional fish and chips. They would stay open late to catch the pub closing time business, forming the ritual of 'the curry on the way home' which many of us still follow now.

The story of Britain's early relationship with India is very much bound up with power and money, and indeed some might argue this is still the case today. As these forces drove the spice trade and colonialism across South Asia, the cuisines of a number of other countries became meshed with the traditional recipes of the region, influencing dishes like the vindaloo (a Goan version of a Portuguese meat dish) and the biryani (a Persian-inspired rice dish).

Lizzie Collingham's **Curry: A Tale of Cooks and Conquerors** looks at how South Asian food has interacted with different cultures around the world. She shows that curry is now international – Japan has kairee raisu (curried rice), New York restaurants sell kosher curries on Lexington Avenue and Samoans use tinned fish and corned beef to make a Polynesian curry. Here in Britain, Walkers have created Chicken Tikka crisps, Heinz sell curry-flavoured baked beans, and chips and curry sauce is a popular combination.

Middle-class sensibilities might balk at the idea of curry-flavoured crisps, believing this to represent the death of an authentic culture. But a second look at the story of Indian food brings into question the idea of an 'authentic' set of dishes. Little could seem more authentically Indian than the chilli pepper, which was in fact introduced by the Portuguese in the 15th century. Furthermore, Collingham points out that the vast majority of 'Indian' restaurants in the UK are actually Bangladeshi. As you can see, the cultural interactions are not as straightforward as they may initially seem.

A recent feature on the BBC website suggested that there is now a movement from some chefs to introduce Anglo-Indian food like the chicken tikka masala into the Indian market. To the ever-growing Indian middle classes, these dishes seem different and exciting. As the spending power of the Indian subcontinent increases, it's clear that power and money still drive the story of this cuisine. Whilst people have money to spend and a taste for the new, these exciting flavours will continue to be reused, repackaged and reinvented. And for those of us who love food, this means more flavour combinations to try.



CHANNA MASALA.

RECIPE BY CARLY MOUNTAIN.

This is a recipe I got from a local restaurant when I was studying in South India. It is for a gravy which can provide a base for most South Indian curries.

BASIC GRAVY

200g onion
100g tomatoes
4 cloves of garlic
10g ginger
½ tsp of turmeric powder
¼ tsp of chilli powder
8 tps of coriander powder
¼ tsp of garam masala
Salt, oil and 1 cup of water

Cut the onion, tomato, garlic and ginger into slices and blend to a smooth paste. Heat the oil in a pan and add the paste to it. Add spices and gently mix over a low heat. Once the mixture is starting to cook, add water gradually to make the gravy. Using your gravy you can make...

CHANNA MASALA

(Serves 2)

Chick peas 50g
8 curry leaves
1 large tomato, diced
1 tsp oil
Gravy 6 tbsps
Water 1 cup

Heat the oil in a pan, add the tomato and curry leaves and sauté for one minute. Add the gravy and half a cup of water and bring to the boil. Add chick peas and extra water if needed and cook until the chick peas soften. This is really good served with poppadoms, rice and some yoghurt.



MATTAR PANEER.

RECIPE BY CORREEN ROBINSON.

This is a curry I discovered at Gopal's Curry Shack at a small music festival in Derbyshire. I ate loads of this curry and got a bit addicted, so when I got home I came up with this tasty recipe to get my fix. Serves 4.

INGREDIENTS

125g paneer
1 onion, chopped
1 tbsp of cumin seeds
2 tbsp of ghee or vegetable oil
1 knob of ginger, chopped
1 tsp coriander
1 tsp turmeric
1½ tsp of chilli powder
1 mug of frozen peas
1 tin of chopped tomatoes
1 red pepper, sliced
1 tbsp of chopped jalepeno peppers

Put the ghee in the pan and heat whilst you chop the paneer into bite-sized chunks. Add the paneer to the ghee. Fry until it is browned and then remove it from the pan and put it to one side for later.

Add the cumin seeds, onion and ginger to the pan and cook until the onion has softened, then stir the red pepper and jalepeno peppers into the mix. After four or five minutes, pour the tin of chopped tomatoes into the pan and season with the coriander, chilli powder and turmeric. Simmer the mix for another five to ten minutes and then add the frozen peas and paneer for another ten minutes or until the peas have softened and cooked.

Serve with vegetable pakoras, onion bhajis, naan bread and a big grin.

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OFF THE SHELF.

SHEFFIELD'S ANNUAL CELEBRATION OF WRITING AND READING.

Welcome to our Off The Shelf special. We've taken our content from their programme, so this is a taster of what's going on in Sheffield throughout October. Check out the full programme online. There's a really good mix of events and workshops for both young and old, something to suit everyone's taste. Poetry lovers have got big names like Daljit Nagra (interview overleaf), Carol Ann Duffy, Wendy Cope and Simon Armitage to choose from, alongside several open mics and slams. If you like novels, there's young author Joe Dunthorne, whose first book **Submarine** was recently made into a feature film. There's a lecture on David Hockney's work and a talk by climber Joe Simpson. There's Hugh Fearnley-Whittingstall if you're a foodie.

Literature festivals are not like Glastonbury. Forget the mud and the huge queues - think more scarfs and tea lights. There is something special about hearing a poet or author read their own work live, when you can see the whites of their eyes. From international poets taking you away to Iran, India and Hungary, to events reminiscing about Sheffield's past and talks on economics and climate change, Off The Shelf provides food for thought. In current funding climates, it is increasingly hard for some councils to justify large spending on cultural activities, but a city without events like these would be much the poorer for it. Go out and support your local poet.

"Art is the only way to run away without leaving home" ~ Twyla Tharp.

JOE.

DALJIT NAGRA.

NEVER REST ON YOUR LAURELS.

INTERVIEW BY JOE KRISS.

Daljit Nagra is one of Britain’s most innovative poets. His poems relate to the experience of British-born Indians, especially Indian Sikhs, and often employ language that imitates the English spoken by Indian immigrants whose first language is Punjabi, sometimes called ‘Punglish’. We talked to Daljit ahead of his appearance at Off the Shelf Literature Festival this month.

Tells us a bit about your latest collection, Tippoo Sultan’s Incredible White-Man-Eating Tiger Toy-Machine!!!

It’s a bit of a mouthful! Well, I wanted to write in the style of the first book, which had both very serious and comic poems, a real mixture of things, and I quite like writing in these different styles and attitudes. I find the British Empire particularly interesting from a historical starting point, where the British met Indians. If it wasn’t for that I wouldn’t be living in Britain now - if it wasn’t for that historical contact. I find it a point of interest, so some of the poems look at the good and bad of the empire, and in the final poem being an empire subject. There’s also poems about children and family, people from dual heritage backgrounds and those sorts of issues.

Was there any particular memory or experience that inspired the book?

Partly looking at the historical arrival of Indians into Britain and how they settled in, interacted with each other and white British people. To continue exploring the second and third generations’ issues with that original first generation. There are issues throughout the book I guess. I married a white woman from Huddersfield. We’ve been together for about a decade and we have a child who has a dual heritage background, which led me to consider those sorts of issues historically, how these people don’t have easily identifiable tick box criteria for identity.

I read that you used to live in Sheffield as a teenager.

My parents had a shop in Gleadless valley. I went to High Storrs school and did my A Levels at Richmond College. I went to university in 1988 and my parents sold their shop in the mid 90s, so we left Sheffield then.

Do you have any strong impressions or memories of Sheffield?

It seemed like no one had jobs and we’d come from West London, which was so affluent. The Indians lived in one area, the Pakistanis in another, the working class and the well-off in another. Everyone was fractioned, and there was a great deal of segregation in the 80s, whether it be race or status, so I felt some friction. We had a shop in a very poor, run-down area but I went to school in a very middle class area, with fashionable shops and large houses. It felt like a different world.

What do you find is the best environment to write in?

I just write whenever. I work part-time in a school and I do a lot of readings so I make a living out of that and running workshops for adults, so I don’t really have any fixed time. I usually wait for an idea to form and I’ll write a first draft in a few minutes. I’ll do some of these every few weeks or few months and wait for the poem to form itself in my head, rather than just writing scraps. I find that’s better once they’ve coalesced in my brain for awhile.

How long does it take you to write a poem?

Some of the poems I’m editing on or off for 2-3 years. I’ll leave them and come back to them, partly just to make sure I’ve got the best version of each idea and each line and to make sure it’s still fresh and natural sounding, with the best possibilities fulfilled. I don’t try and publish a poem for at least two years, so I’ll let it sit there and come back to it every few months. Sometimes a year later I’ve just changed a word and it’s been worth the wait. It’s also given me the opportunity to do background reading of the poem, to perhaps find a more complex level I can put in the poem. I guess I’m very slow but I enjoy finding ways of keeping a poem alive as it were.

Do you always wait for inspiration to strike or do you ever force yourself to write?

I’ve not done that for years now. I used to force poems and editing, but now I just wait for the poem and the editing to call to me, if that doesn’t sound too weird. I’ll try not to force it, as when I’ve done that in the past I’ve felt I’ve damaged the poem. Editing is a delicate thing.

Do you have a certain way of developing poems?

There’s various things I end up doing. If it’s going to come in one big whoosh, I’ll just let it write itself and edit later, but I’ll also research the area the poem is about. I tend to read lots of stuff around the area to prime my unconcious in the poem. I often find altered states are a good place for poems to come from. I had flu several months ago and wrote a few poems that went into my collection. It’s great editing on a hangover. You want to find the right word and sometimes being logical doesn’t help. So it’s not that I’m encouraging people to get drunk and write - it’s the hangover after that’s useful.

What are you reading at the moment?

I’m reading loads of poetry all the time, every day. So many at the moment: Les Murray, the Australian poet; Czcsawl Milosz, a Polish poet who has been translated by American poets; Jo Shapscott, who I work with. It’s an honour to work with her at Faber and it’s a pleasure reading her work. There’s simplicity and cleverness to her poems at the same time.

What would your advice be to aspiring poets?

It’s worth sending poems out to magazines and using editors as a checking device. If they’ve been rejected by different magazines often that means the poem needs editing. Be very thick-skinned when sending things out. Magazines get sent so many of them, editors might not find your poems to their taste, or read them in a wrong mood that day. Look for advice and critical feedback on your poems, not just “It’s good”, because unless it’s on the level of Shakespeare or Milton it can always be improved. Never rest on your laurels.

You can see Daljit read on 27th October at the Quaker Meeting House.



WORDLIFE.

COLLATED BY JOE KRISS.

We're pretty excited by Word Life's crop of poets this month - Wendy Cope, Daljit Nagra and Joe Dunthorne. Please also read our interview with Daljit Nagra.

Thanks to all those who attended our Upstairs/Downstairs event at The Riverside on 24th September with Derrick Brown. We're back again at The Forum on 9th October helping to launch the Off The Shelf Literature Festival. This month's issue is packed with listings and interviews to give you a taste of the events to come. Below are a selection of some of the poetry events we think are going to be a bit special.

JOE.

NOW THEN PRESENTS...

OFF THE SHELF OPENING PARTY.
SUNDAY 9TH OCTOBER. 7.00PM.
THE FORUM, DEVONSHIRE STREET.
FREE.

Now Then hosts a party featuring a poetry slam, poet and comedian Mab Jones ("utterly brilliant" - The Guardian) followed by hotly-tipped Sheffield group King Capisce and one of our favourite all time performers, Denis Jones.

GILGAMESH.

THURSDAY 20TH OCTOBER. 7.45PM.
MONTGOMERY THEATRE, SURREY STREET.
£9/£6 (CONS).

Two of Sheffield's finest poets, Tim Ralphs and Simon Heywood, retell the Epic of Gilgamesh, one of the earliest works of literature known to man, preserved for millennia on clay tablets. The story follows Gilgamesh of Uruk (modern day Iraq and Kuwait) and is thought to be a combination of legends and poems written for the king.

EDGELANDS.

MICHAEL SYMMONDS ROBERTS AND PAUL FARLEY.
FRIDAY 21ST OCTOBER. 7.30PM.
JESSOP WEST EXHIBITION SPACE,
UNIVERSITY OF SHEFFIELD.
TICKETS £7/£5 (CONS).

Michael Symmonds Roberts and Paul Farley's Edgelands is an exploration of the boundary between urban and rural environments. Read recently on Radio 4, the book challenges conventional concepts of wilderness by looking closely at the country's railways, motorways, allotments, business parks and landfill sites. The two acclaimed poets cast a romantic eye over neglected post-industrial spaces in a bid to shine a light on their strange beauty.

This talk will see both writers explore the themes covered in Edgelands and is curated by Simon Armitage with support from the University of Sheffield.

SEEING STARS.

LAUNCH OF THE SHEFFIELD SIMON ARMITAGE
SOUNDSCAPE.
WEDNESDAY 26TH OCTOBER. 1PM.
JESSOP WEST EXHIBITION SPACE,
UNIVERSITY OF SHEFFIELD.

FREE.

storyingsheffield.com/soundart

This event will offer the first snippets of a new soundscape project overseen by acclaimed Yorkshire poet Simon Armitage, which combines his verse with the voices of the people of Sheffield. Selected poems from Simon's 2010 collection Seeing Stars were discussed by Sheffielders and their responses recorded. This mish-mash of voices is combined with recitals of the original pieces by Simon himself, providing a powerful new framework for the appreciation of literature. There will also be some discussion of a recent University of Sheffield study into how people respond to poetry.

PROBABLY.

If I'm not sure, I can't say yes.
You need an answer by today.
Probably. Unless. Unless

I've freaked from all the strain and stress,
They've come and carted me away.
If I'm not sure, I can't say yes.

If I'm alive, at this address,
I'll try to do it. I can say
Probably. Unless. Unless

I'm down with flu or in some mess
So dire that I can't work or play.
If I'm not sure, I can't say yes.

I cannot guarantee success.
I'll blow it, forfeiting the pay,
Probably. Unless. Unless

I ask for help in my distress.
Does someone hear me when I pray?
If I'm not sure, I can't say yes.
Probably. Unless. Unless.

WENDY COPE.

Taken from Wendy's collection Family Values, reprinted here by the kind permission of the author. You can hear Wendy read on Tuesday 25th October at 7.30pm at The University of Sheffield Auditorium. Tickets are £8 and £6 for concessions.

PHALLACY.

How oft do mates bang on at length about
the length they're hung and grab their crotch to slash
the air then chuck an arm at will around
a chum while necking Stella till they're lashed.

To tell the truth, I'm really not well hung,
and thus I hide from mates my prince's state,
this conk is king of my poor frame, no trunks
would lunchbox find to bank a lady's gaze.
And yet I hope the guys won't feel too down
when I recount my lover's hardly wimpish
-watch her stiffen over corrrrrs! from louts
who check her out too long (for she's that fit!).
In bed, most nights she'll sigh: O love, I love
the woman's way you work your subtle touch.

DALJIT NAGRA.

Taken from Tippoo Sultan's Incredible White-Man-Eating Tiger Toy-Machine!!!, reprinted here by the kind permission of the author You can hear Daljit Nagra read alongside Lily Mosini on Thursday 27th October at 7.30pm at the Quaker Meeting House. Tickets are £6 and £4 for concessions.

DEATHS I'LL NEVER LIVE THROUGH #3.

Yucatan, Mexico. 1009.

Beheaded on top of Coba temple,
relieved of my freight like a cab
unhitched from its trailer, down
a hundred and sixty epiphanies,
one for each step: at last, I get you,
Jackson Pollock, now I'm spraying
red in cartwheels, spinning past
the crowds who line the half-way
mark (Beware the Spaniards, friends!)
they cheer me as I pinball off
stone Gods of Extra-Life
then onwards, centrifugal, sparing
a thought for the sacrificial tourist
who, a thousand years hence,
(while stretching for a snap
that both frames the crumbling
monolith yet keeps his sister's head
attached) will fall, roll, pick up pace,
then skittle through the rental bikes.
Down again, I'm grinning meekly,
teaching physics with each bounce,
it's the world that spins, not me,
I prepare to meet my stack:
the heads of bad sports, bad poets,
the heads of the purest children,
all smiling up, I am coming
my sweets, I have so much news.

JOE DUNTHORNE.

Taken from his Faber New Poets collection, reprinted here by the kind permission of the author. You can hear Joe read extracts from his latest novel Wild Abandon on Sunday 30th October at 6pm at The Showroom Cinema. Tickets are priced at £7.50 and £5.50 for concessions.

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LISTINGS.

OUR PICK OF THE FESTIVITIES.

Off the Shelf Festival of Writing and Reading celebrates its 20th anniversary this year and is once again expected to bring in a total audience of over 20,000 people. Hundreds of talks, readings, workshops, debates and performances take place throughout October at a myriad of venues across Sheffield, appealing to all age ranges and interests.

Pick up a copy of the Off the Shelf programme in town or visit offtheshelf.org.uk for more details.

Tickets for all events can be bought at:

Arena Ticket Shop: arenaticketshop.co.uk / 0114 256 5567
Sheffield City Hall: sheffieldcityhall.co.uk / 0114 278 9789

WILL SELF.

WEDNESDAY 12TH OCTOBER. 7PM.
PENNINE THEATRE, HALLAM UNI.
£9/£7 (CONS).

Will Self is among the most admired journalists and writers working in the UK. Just as well-known as a team captain on Shooting Stars as the winner of numerous literary prizes including Whitbread Novel of the Year, Self is a provocative and sardonic creative mind with an impressive back catalogue spanning 20 years.

At this event, the author explores his latest book **Walking to Hollywood**, which he describes as “a cross between a comical farce and an intense misery memoir”. Separated into three parts, it takes in a description of the life of (fictional) international sculptor Sherman Oaks, a dwarf who specialises in casts of his own body, as well as a quest by Self to track down the person who murdered cinema with CGI and an account of a walk up the East Yorkshire coast.

THE LOST PHOTOGRAPHS OF CAPTAIN SCOTT.

SUNDAY 16TH OCTOBER. 1PM.
SHOWROOM CINEMA.
£7.50/£5.50 (CONS).

Legendary explorer Captain Scott died as he returned from an expedition to the South Pole in 1912. His diaries have been the subject of much scrutiny and inspiration over the last century, but the intrepid gent also took a collection of stunning photographs during his trip that until now have remained unseen.

With the release of **The Lost Photographs of Captain Scott**, historian Dr David M Wilson explores the personal side of the adventure with shots of vast mountain ranges and portraits of Scott’s ambitious team, accompanied by commentary. Wilson is the great-nephew of Dr Edward Wilson, the Chief of the Scientific Staff who died with Scott, giving the book and this illustrated talk a personal, intimate dimension.

JON RONSON – THE PSYCHOPATH TEST.

MONDAY 17TH OCTOBER. 7.30PM.
THE AUDITORIUM, UNIVERSITY OF SHEFFIELD STUDENTS’ UNION.
£10/£8 (CONS).

The **Psychopath Test** is an exploration of mental illness that dares to ask difficult questions. It begins after the writer is challenged to solve the mystery of a puzzling book sent to a leading neurologist. He meets inmates, people who deny the existence of mental disorders and the psychologist who designed the now-standard Psychopath Test, the latter of whom is convinced that many politicians and chief executives are in fact psychopaths.

Jon Ronson is also the author of **Them: Adventures With Extremists** and **The Men Who Stare At Goats**, which was recently made into a film starring George Clooney, Jeff Bridges, Kevin Spacey and Ewan McGregor.

FULL UP?

A DEBATE WITH DANNY DORLING AND CARL LEE.
WEDNESDAY 19TH OCTOBER. 7.30PM.
LONGLEY PARK SIXTH FORM COLLEGE, HORNINGLOW ROAD.
£3.

At this event, geographers Danny Dorling of Sheffield University and Carl Lee of Sheffield College will debate the case for and against further human development. Dorling will argue that there is enough space in the world for more people, while Lee will look to counter each of his four claims, contending that careful limits should be placed on growth. There will also be plenty of room for audience discussion.

PANIC ON A PLATE.

HOW SOCIETY DEVELOPED AN EATING DISORDER.
THURSDAY 20TH OCTOBER. 8.30PM.
QUAKER MEETING HOUSE, 10 ST JAMES STREET.
£6/£5 (CONS).

Food in the Western world is more varied and affordable than ever before, but with this dietary shift come critics who believe this abundance is leading to poor diets and reduced quality of life. This view is challenged by Rob Lyons, who targets both so-called junk food and organic eating campaigns in his new book **Panic on a Plate: How Society Developed an Eating Disorder**.

Rob’s view is that this new, self-centred approach to food “breeds a personal sense of vulnerability” and detracts from more important social issues. Disdain of bad food breeds a kind of elite contempt for the poorer parts of our society and thus creates a barrier to social equality. The writer will discuss this topic in an optimistic talk at the Quaker Meeting House on St James Street.

Rob is also the deputy editor of online current affairs magazine Spiked.

FROM HOLLYWOOD TO SHEFFIELD.

A WALK WITH GEOFF NICHOLSON.
SATURDAY 22ND OCTOBER. 6PM.
BEGINS AT THE SHOWROOM CAFÉ.
£7/£5 (CONS).

Geoff Nicholson is an author and avid walker, born in Sheffield but now residing in Los Angeles. This unorthodox tour will encompass both cities, as he describes a recent walk he took in Los Angeles before transposing the directions onto the streets of Sheffield. As if that wasn’t enough, he will also use a 1927 Baedeker Guide to Sheffield for navigation purposes, adding yet another layer to this original concept.

The walk will end wherever it ends, with drinks being sought at the nearest establishment. Participants will also have a chance to talk to Geoff about his new book **The Lost Art of Walking: The History, Science, Philosophy and Literature of Pedestrianism**, which examines the impact walking has had on cultures past and present.

Geoff Nicholson is the author of twenty books including **Footsucker** and **Bleeding London**, which was shortlisted for the Whitbread Prize in 1997.

GRAPHIC ART WORKSHOP WITH NICK HAYES.

MONDAY 24TH OCTOBER. 2PM-4PM.
OLD LOCAL STUDIES LIBRARY, CENTRAL LIBRARY.
SUITABLE FOR 11 – 15 YEARS.
£6.

Artist Nick Hayes has created two collections of short comics and his latest effort **The Rime of the Modern Mariner** is a contemporary, graphical take on the famous Coleridge poem. His artwork adorns the front page of this year’s Off the Shelf programme. In this workshop for 11 to 15-year-olds, Nick will share his artistic techniques and help participants explore their own comic book style of art. All materials are provided.

JOE SIMPSON.

WEDNESDAY 26TH OCTOBER. 7PM.
SHOWROOM CINEMA.
£7.50/£5.50 (CONS).

Mountaineer, writer and speaker Joe Simpson is best known for **Touching the Void**, an account of the near-fatal first ascent of the west face of Siula Grande in the Peruvian Andes, during which his climbing partner Simon Yates was forced to cut a rope suspending Simpson above a crevasse after the two were separated. The novel has sold two million copies and a documentary was released in 2003.

His latest offering **The Sound of Gravity** is “a powerful tale of love, loss and redemption”, tracing a split-second decision on a snowy mountain to its conclusion later in life. Joe is considered a legend by much of the climbing community, telling tales of human survival and endurance against the odds.

MIKE HULME.

WHY WE DISAGREE ABOUT CLIMATE CHANGE.

INTERVIEW BY SAM WALBY.

Mike Hulme has been a climate researcher since 1988, starting his career at the School of Environmental Sciences at the University of East Anglia.

He is now a professor of climate change at the very same institution and in 2009 published a book called *Why We Disagree About Climate Change*. He also founded the Tyndall Centre for Climate Change Research in 2000, which he directed until 2007. We caught up with Mike as he made preparations for his Off the Shelf talk on 5th October.

What will you focus on in your talk at Off the Shelf?

What I will do is show how the idea of human-caused climate change, and what should be done about it, brings to the surface many of the reasons why people differ from each other: our different worldviews, beliefs, values and ideologies. Scientific knowledge of this phenomenon is still patchy at best and the uncertainties about the future mean that there is no single uncontested course of action. We argue about climate change not because science is wrong or ambiguous, but because we hold different beliefs and visions about how we want the human world to be organised.

The idea of climate change as a cultural and ideological phenomenon is interesting. Have you taken a lot of criticism over it since your book was published?

Yes, I have had my critics, but I have had many more people welcome my ideas because they take climate change away from being a predominantly ‘science’ or ‘environment’ issue and turn it into a cultural, ethical and ideological one. This legitimises people to participate in debates and arguments about what should be done, rather than leaving them to feel like they always have to either defend or attack ‘the science’ before any sensible policy discussion can take place. My critics have accused me of a) making it easier for sceptics to attack ‘the science’, b) implying that we should ‘do nothing’ about climate change and c) being part of the green-red environmental socialist conspiracy which has invented human-caused climate change as a political issue. Needless to say, I think all three criticisms are false.

You have spoken before about minimising the use of alarmist language when discussing climate change. Is this because you believe the threat has been overstated, or just that it needs to be approached with a more level head?

It is very easy to overstate the risks of human-induced climate change and to imply that our scientific reading of the future is more definite than it can ever be. I have been involved in climate change research for 30 years now and have heard many dodgy claims, by both scientists and non-scientists alike (I’ve probably offered a few myself earlier in my career!) Often, people think that sexing-up scientific claims will lead to more political or public action. In fact, it is more likely to do

just the opposite. The risks of climate change don’t need to be sexed-up - just presented in a level-headed way which accepts that there is still a lot we don’t know.

Do you support widespread decarbonisation? Or is there a better way to react to a changing climate?

There are good reasons for developing reliable, low-cost energy supply technologies which do not rely heavily on fossil carbon fuels, quite apart from concerns about climate change. These reasons are air quality and human health, energy security, peak oil and fuel affordability. We need to broaden the arguments for decarbonisation away from climate change. The best way to decarbonise is to invest hugely in technology innovation – not to subsidise trivial-scale technologies like wind and solar roof tiles, but to go for big breakthrough technologies around hydrogen, new nuclear, concentrated solar and fourth generation biofuels.

It seems to me that certain climate change buzzwords go in and out of fashion. Will this happen with carbon, do you think?

Yes, we have rather fetishised carbon I feel, ignoring the many other ways human activities alter climate: methane, HFCs, aerosols, soot, land cover changes, nitrous oxides etc. In fact, CO2 emitted from fossil carbon sources is only 40-45% of the human influence on climate. We need a much more piecemeal approach than being totally obsessed about carbon footprints.

Tell us about the Tyndall Centre for Climate Change Research and its objectives.

I no longer run the Tyndall, having ‘retired’ four years ago. The Centre continues, although these days it is a much looser network of different university departments collaborating on the basis of historical interests in conducting inter-disciplinary research on climate change which is relevant for policy debates. The Centre has recently added Fudan University in Shanghai to its network.

Mike’s Why We Disagree About Climate Change talk will take place at the Sheffield Union Auditorium on 5th October.



KELHAM ISLAND TAVERN

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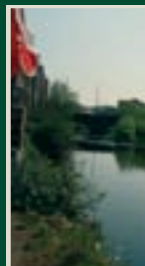
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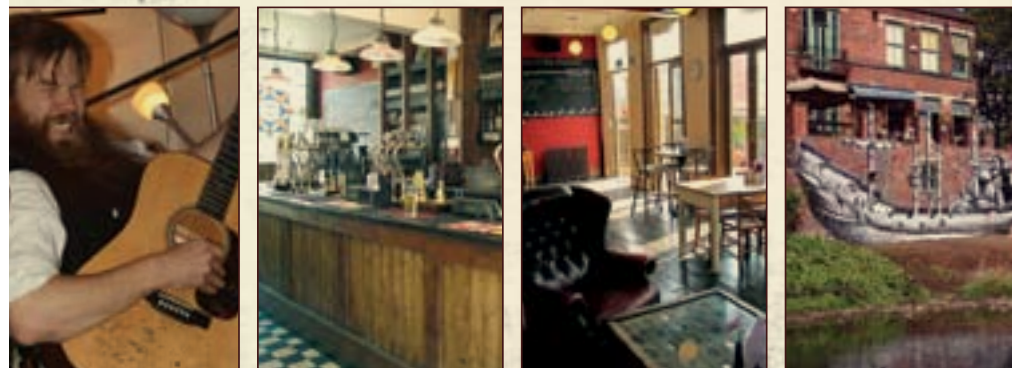
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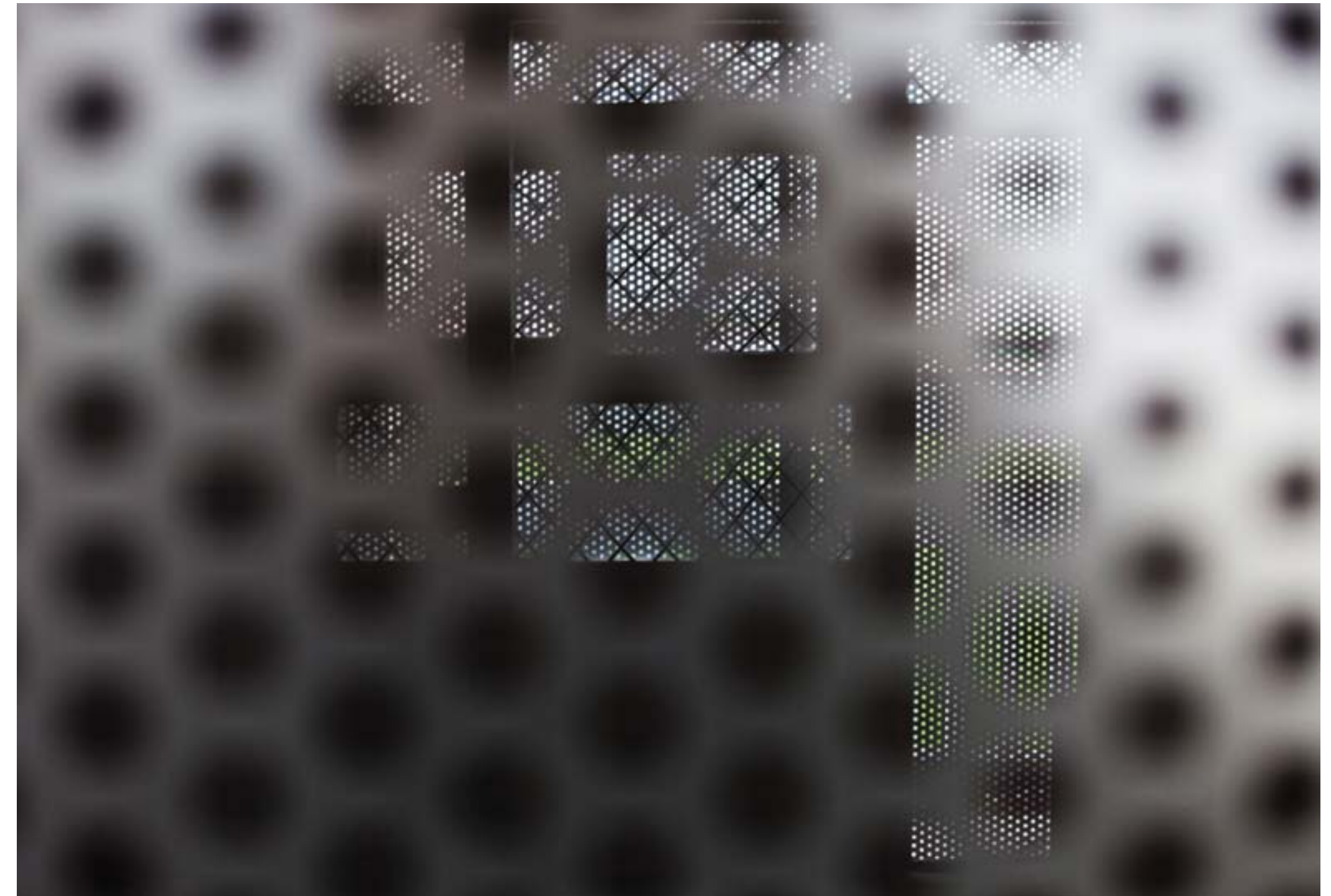
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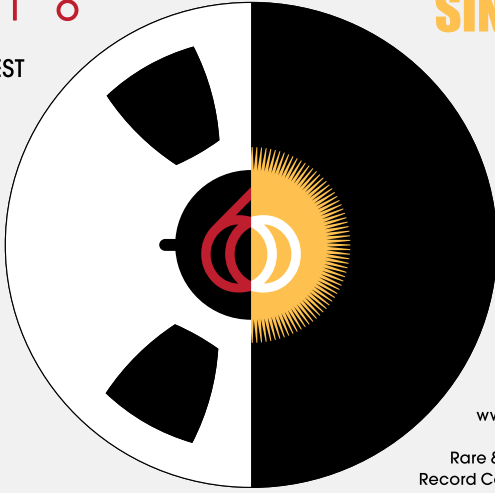
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The Subways

Wed.28.Sept

Foundry
7PM / £10.50 adv (14+)

www.thesubways.net

Facebook.com/thesubways
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Following the release of a free download via their website, The Subways release their third album, 'Money and Celebrity' on 19th September 2011 on Cooking Vinyl. The tour kicks off the same week, their first full UK outing since October 2008 (non-students welcome).

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Sat.22.Oct

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www.imperial-leisure.co.uk

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The Rifles return with their long awaited and much anticipated third record Freedom Run, a new studio album that bristles with a newly found energy, confidence and maturity (non-students welcome).

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Last featured in the Sheffield Photographers special (NT33) - Andy Brown remains firmly one of my favourite local working artists.

Four sets of images here - Park Hill, The Dark Peak, Westfield Bradford and The White Peak. All taken locally, they show a good cross-section of the hills, and the people that live amongst them.

Good photography need not be direct representation. Tonal variation, colour and mood are equally important. The man himself follows.

You've chosen mostly images of landscapes for your feature this time around. Why?

It just happens to be the stuff I've been working on recently. I'm working on more traditional documentary / portraiture projects too though. The Westfield Bradford images were the result of a trip to Bradford to look at disused shops. The Park Hill images are from work I've been doing documenting the redevelopment of the flats up there. The Dark Peak and White Peak images are something I keep coming back to.

What was your shooting method for the Peaks photos?

The White Peak shots are much more representational, and tend to involve driving round in the snow looking for shots. I've got stuck down a farm track doing that. I had to get towed out by a kindly farmer. My dad had to come out and tow me once too. Sorry Dad. The Dark Peak images are more about spending time in woods and forests at dusk, shooting until its dark, and then wishing I'd remembered a torch.

I love the Peak District but most photography of it doesn't move me at all. Anything involving sunsets, graduated filters, and sheep or boulders positioned according to the rule of thirds just leaves me absolutely cold. The Dark Peak images are an attempt to capture something of what it actually feels like to be there. It's beautiful, but not in a postcard way. All these pictures are single, long exposure images. I find it interesting that although they are very abstract, they feel to me a lot more like being there than anything more representational does.

Have you preferred your portrait or architectural shots of Park Hill?

I've really enjoyed the stuff I've done up there documenting the renovation for Urban Splash. For my personal work, I've tried hard not to photograph the obvious architecture. It's rare to go up there and not see someone with a camera on a tripod taking pictures of geometric brutalist architecture. It's just been done to death. I wanted to focus on the people who still live there, and the details that tell you about life up there - the motorbike tracks on abandoned rows, the flocks of pigeons.

Do you work entirely in digital?

Pretty much. I occasionally use 35mm film, but everything here is digital.

I'm assuming Bradford Council didn't pay you for your work on Westfield Bradford?

You're quite right ! It's personal work. I first went to Bradford to take pictures after reading a report arguing that both Sheffield and Bradford had reached a tipping point in terms of empty city centre properties, that both were past recovery in the traditional sense. Bradford is in a much worse state than Sheffield for empty shops. It's full of lovely old civic buildings with the ground floors boarded up. But then, right in the centre, is a massive hole. It's like a bomb's gone off. Have a look online. You can't miss it. It's a 51,000 square foot crater. It was cleared to accommodate a Westfield shopping centre, starting in 2004. Problems with securing big-name tenants have meant that nothing has happened since. Just this year, part of the site has been turned into a temporary park, and a scaled-down proposal has been submitted for a smaller shopping centre.

I don't feel the need to be too political about this, but it's hard not to draw conclusions about overreaching consumerism. The thing I love about the barrier round the hole is that the slogans and stock imagery are so lazy and completely of their time. What is 'urban energy'? What does a grinning, oversaturated couple eating vegetables have to do with 'café culture'? They're meaningless. It shouldn't have mattered, because they were meant to be fleeting. They were meant to have disappeared years ago, when the Sugababes came to open Boots (which happened at Westfield London). But they're still here, and the longer they remain the better they look.

What recent work by other photographers has impressed you?

There are lots of great photographers in Sheffield. Gemma Thorpe, James Dodd and Theo Simpson have all been doing some fascinating work recently. Theo's got a self-published book out called **What We Buy**, which is a beautifully-made study of the useless products you can get in bargain shops. Richard Hanson has had an exhibition of his work on the rebuilding of Haiti in Sheffield in October and November. It's at the Workstation and runs til the 3rd November. If it's still running when you read this, go!

Further afield, two photographers whose work I've really enjoyed recently are Anoek Steketee, who has been documenting theme parks around the world, and Taryn Simon, whose work is always beautiful and meaningful.

Are the best photos planned or spontaneous?

The best photos are ones that move you. These can be either planned or spontaneous. Even 'spontaneous' images are often the product of hours of work on the part of the photographer though. Street photography is the clearest example of this.

What music are you listening to at the moment? Has it influenced your work at all?

I listen to music for hours every day. Spotify brings out the best and worst of me. Sometimes I'll discover an incredible band I didn't know, but equally often I'll realize I've been listening to Manowar or Christian hip hop for an hour. I would like to think that things like 65daysofstatic fit my pictures fairly well. I've also been listening to You Are Listening To Los Angeles, a website that streams ambient music alongside real, live LAPD radio broadcasts. It's mesmerizing and perfect for photoshopping in the small hours.

What other projects are you working on?

I'm very excited to be working on an Arts Council-funded project called Behind the Scenes at the Children's Hospital. Shaun Bloodworth, Richard Hanson and I have had extensive access to the hospital and have been documenting it on behalf of the Children's Hospital Charity. It's a brilliant project, and there are plans afoot for a public exhibition in Sheffield at some point soon.

Why is Sheffield worth documenting?

There are ideas and stories everywhere. It's about seeking them out and working out how to photograph them. I've got a lot of affection for Sheffield. A lot of people are proud of it and feel they belong here, and that's quite rare I think. Clive Egginton, a great Sheffield photographer, is trying to bring photographers documenting Sheffield together under the banner of Archive Sheffield. His website is well worth checking out.

Is DIY culture in Sheffield achieving as much as in other cities?

I'm not sure how much it ever really achieves, and I'm not that clued up regarding what's going on elsewhere, but there are loads of creative people here doing their own thing through all sorts of channels. Sheffield Publicity Department, Article, all the stuff going on at Bank Street, Counterfeit magazine, the Statement images collective, the recent fanzine workshops at Site, you lot at Now Then. I think there are blurred lines now more than ever concerning what constitutes DIY. Sheffield does seem to have an incredible number of good creative types though, and good work will always be noticed if you keep at it.

PAGE 44.

PAGE 45.



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Anyone who's done something as seemingly nonchalant as wearing a band t-shirt has been privy to her truly manipulative ways. You like a band. You buy a t-shirt to show support. There's nothing darker at work.

Allow me to be the first to shout "balls!" You've been had mate. You've bought a t-shirt to let everyone know you like said band. There's absolutely nothing wrong with that mind.

I love my 'J DILLA CHANGED MY LIFE' t-shirt but I'm very aware of the attention it garners. I'm ok with that though, because he did and we're not talking about me anyway.

If you love something you want people to know about it. You can claim you're humble until the Aberdeen Angus commute home but a couple of gin and tonics will always loosen your tongue. There's no better way to portray allegiance than a good ol' fashioned uniform.

If you like hip hop, dress as though you're between wardrobes following miraculous gastric band surgery. If metal is your bag you could do worse than snagging any item of clothing that's really, really, really dark blue, dying your hair really, really, really dark blue and growing a ginger beard. Or if your particular brand is punk/pop/emo/shouty music, go ahead and look like you've been sexually assaulted by a clown.

People can indeed adore the output a particular genre provides without wearing the accompanying garb though. You can also say that a style of music doesn't have a uniform, and you'd be right - but a scene does.

Everyone enjoys a sense of belonging and music, that little harpy, provides the grandest of communities. But like any harpy worth her salt, music can draw you in and make you lose yourself. When you find yourself getting vexed at 'man dem mercing your crepes' at a gig or covering yourself in tattoos of an artist who has the shelf life of a reduced Muller Rice, you've likely lost sight of what got you hooked in the first place. There's a fine line between defining your musical identity and letting your musical identity define you. If the only reason you listen to music is because it matches the particular philosophy your scene possesses then claiming you love it seems somewhat invalid.

As David Hargreaves et al testify to in their succinctly titled book, What Are Musical Identities And Why Are They Important?:

"Because music is essentially a social activity - it is something we do along with and for others, either as listeners or as co-creators - there is a strong argument that the social functions of music subsume the cognitive and emotional functions in certain respects."

They also go on to use words like 'interpreted' and 'saxophonist'.

I've always felt that the personal appeal of music should outweigh the social aspects. It's much easier to appreciate a more obscure style of music with the backing of your peers, but if that appreciation is grounded in social terms then it's less of a personal identity and more of an ideology. As a bloke called Nicholas Cook said:

"In today's world, deciding what music to listen to is a significant part of deciding and announcing to people not just who you want to be...but who you are."

So I shall announce to you thus: "Who I am is a man who likes J Dilla, but I don't want to be the kind of person who has to wear a 'J DILLA CHANGED MY LIFE' t-shirt to let you know that."

But he did though, and we're not talking about me anyway.

THE PAYROLL UNION.

16TH SEPTEMBER.
LANTERN THEATRE.

REVIEWER - BEN ECKERSLEY.

The Payroll Union are clearly a very hardworking band, as **Your Obedient Servant** is the second EP they have produced in less than six months. Recorded by Alan Smyth at 2Fly and released by new Sheffield label Crystal Ship Records, its launch was celebrated with a gig at the Lantern Theatre.

If you've not been there before, find something to see there to support an excellent independent venture, but also for the sheer pleasure of being in the venue itself. It is one of Sheffield's true gems – a fully equipped and utterly beautiful Victorian proscenium arch theatre in miniature with only 90 seats. Any evening there becomes imbued with a certain magic.

First up was a solo set from Robert George Saul, better known as frontman of The Purgatory Players. I've seen him in his full band guise several times, but this was my first sight of him as a solo artist and, frankly, it was staggeringly good. The softly strummed guitar often faded into the background. His voice, a naturally rich baritone, came forwards and filled the room. The songs he chose were simple, filled with humanity and pathos. 'Cathy' held the audience in rapt attention and there were at least ten clear seconds of silence after 'Wedding Prayer'. No one wanted to break the mood with something as crass as applause, though Saul tempered the atmosphere with some brilliantly witty storytelling.

In contrast, Mike Hughes, a singer-songwriter from Rotherham, could really have done with the support of a large band. His voice was powerful though not always subtle, but his songs – on the whole quite raw and bluesy – were let down by guitar playing that couldn't keep up, and he never fully caught the attention of the audience. In another context I imagine I would have enjoyed it more, but Robert was an extremely hard act to follow.

The mood was very excitable as the sold-out crowd took their seats for The Payroll Union. They are highly able and accomplished musicians, and for over an hour they did what they do best, entertaining the audience with their accessible and thoroughly enjoyable brand of Americana. Singer Pete David is a deeply charismatic frontman with an engaging style and an easy-going voice. But it was his backing musicians who really helped steal the show, creating a full and rich sound, never dull, but never overbearing either. Drummer Ben Fuller is especially deserving of a mention.

After beginning with some slower new songs – '1826' with its droning harmonica lines was a particular highlight – they gained energy with the upbeat hoe-down music they've built their reputation on. 'Richmond Town' reminded me of **Heartbreaker**-era Ryan Adams, and personally speaking, I can't think of a more flattering comparison. It's fully deserved though. They'll be all over Sheffield this autumn, so make sure you go and see them, because you can be certain it'll be a hugely entertaining evening.

LITTLE ROBOTS / ZACHARY CALE / THIS FRONTIER NEEDS HEROES.

9TH SEPTEMBER.
HEELEY INSTITUTE.

REVIEWER - NICK DEL'NERO.

"I feel like I'm on a hill in a little village somewhere, far away from home."

This is how Zac Cale described the vibe at the Heeley Institute on Friday 9th September. The community centre, located just past the Sheaf View, was sweetly decorated and dimly lit. The organisers had even cooked up an alluring cushion pile which bled onto the stage, where people who wanted more intimacy could lounge around. All the bands were musical refugees from the End of the Road Festival just a few days before. Kate le Bon, one of the scheduled artists, couldn't make it due to a cold or Ebola virus or some other weird pathogen, so it was up to the other three acts to fill up the night.

Little Robots, first to take to the stage, are a charming group of folksy musos sporting a rag-tag collection of country instruments. Laura Little, Mary Booth and Dolly May spent the set working their beautiful and flawless vocal harmonies, while multi-musical talent Ric Booth underpinned them with hugely impressive banjo, guitar and violin performances. 'Goodbye Bennie Boy', a strange cocktail of blues-folk with an almost trip hop beat by drummer Guy Whittaker, was the stand-out track of the set for me. It was a straightforward masterclass in group performance, with a technically perfect and gorgeously inventive guitar accompaniment by Ric. Little Robots are versatile performers and accomplished songwriters.

Next up was Brooklyn-based Zachary Cale, who immediately changed the pace of the evening. It was as if people held their breath collectively, such was the intimacy in the room. His performance was narcotic and captivating and had a kind of dreamy grace at all times. 'Eye for an Eye' was perhaps my favourite song of the night, a slow, rich and melancholic track that perfectly framed Zac's hypnotic style.

The final act were the slightly rugged, tambourine-driven new-folk band This Frontier Needs Heroes. Also from New York City, the group comprised Brad and Jessica Lauretti, a high-powered brother-sister duo. From the outset they won over the crowd with their sibling banter and Brad's quirky storytelling. At times their energy outmatched their technical skill and they were beset by a few tuning issues, which slightly hampered the performance. Even so, the best parts of this set were thoroughly enjoyable.

I wasn't sure what to expect from the Heeley Institute as a venue, but it surpassed all expectations and provided a genuinely touching setting for one of the most intimate gigs I've attended in a long time. Sadly Zac Cale and This Frontier Needs Heroes have now left our shores for Europe, but Little Robots remain on British soil, so seek them out.

THE WAR ON DRUGS.

15TH SEPTEMBER.
THE HARLEY.

REVIEWER - ANDREW ALMOND.

There was the unmistakable whiff of something tantalisingly exciting in the air at The Harley on the evening of 15th September. It was an atmosphere a lot more profound than the usual pre-freshers' week buzz that reverberates around the city during the early weeks of autumn

For those who are yet discover The War On Drugs, in short the band is a rock and roll quartet in the finest sense of the cliché. They play music reminiscent of the great artists of North American popular music - Dylan, Neil Young, Springsteen et al - and they have already released perhaps the finest album of 2011 so far, entitled *Slave Ambient*. Of course such a concise appraisal of such an exceptional ensemble could never do them or their unique, life-affirming brand of Americana justice, and it was clear that it is in a live context that The War on Drugs shine most brightly.

The band came to the stage at around half past nine opening with 'Best Night' from *Slave Ambient*. It was a slow burner to start which heard frontman Adam Granduciel croon: "Been a soldier from the start, been released and torn apart". 'Baby Missiles' followed, a track which it appears likely will become one of the tracks that move The War on Drugs out of cult obscurity and to a wider audience, what with its pop hook and agitated, restless energy.

Granduciel's chiming guitar licks were punctuated throughout by his idiosyncratic soloing, as he appeared to lose all perception of his surroundings and engross himself in the panoramic soundscapes. He was at ease between tracks as he spoke about wondering around "our beautiful town" during the day, his harmonica which was stolen in Leeds the previous evening and how his old guitar, despite routinely falling out of tune, is like a "fine wine".

The band rattled through 'Brothers' and the honky-tonk 'I Was There' before launching into a brace of tracks from equally acclaimed debut *Wagonwheel Blues*. 'Taking the Farm' with its stream of consciousness lyrics, 'Arms Like Boulders' and its crunching opening riff and the titanic My Bloody Valentine noiserock of 'A Needle in Your Eye #16' all followed before the band returned to stage for a one-track encore.

It was the perfect curtain call to an evening that highlighted the best in live music events in Sheffield and featured one of the most exciting live bands at large today. This was one battle the War On Drugs had won.

BESTIVAL.

8-11TH SEPTEMBER.
ISLE OF WIGHT.

REVIEWER - TOM CHILDS.

"I just love everything here!" professed a member of my festival troupe on the final night of Rob Da Bank's annual island-bound soiree, and despite the cocktail of substances that may have inspired such hyperbole, one sobering week later I can only come to the same conclusion.

I bought my Bestival ticket fully aware of the arduous pilgrimage the festival's location asks of its attendees and quite unaware of the intermittent torrents of rain that would wash away all manner of sin over the weekend. I only knew one thing when I parted with my hard-earned £200 - The Cure were headlining.

Robert Smith and his noir-clad chums didn't disappoint. Playing for an all-too-brief two and a half hours, their set saw me weep twice - boys do cry - feeling a euphoria that I can only assume is akin to true love and joining a field of people in howling Smith's lyrics back to him like a huge ecstatic autocue. I hope that if I have a child, their nativity is capable of replacing the goth-romance combo of 'Lovesong' and 'Just Like Heaven' as my happiest moment, though I'm slightly sceptical.

The day prior had seen Kitty, Daisy and Lewis followed by Brian Wilson on the main stage, both of whom inspired some serious jiving from those present and enjoyed a welcome accompaniment from the sun. But the day belonged to Public Enemy, who performed with such bile and power, without a "rolex" or a "bitch" in sight, that it threw serious speculation on the plight of modern hip hop. The unifying content of Chuck D and Flava Flav's material was somewhat undermined by the latter's shameless mid-set plugging of his new book, but DJ Lord scratching 'Smells Like Teen Spirit' beyond all recognition just about made up for this.

As good as the line-up was, what really made this year's Bestival so memorable was the evident thoughtfulness of the organisers. Everywhere you went there were psychedelic installations to play with, free sideshows to experience, well-selected independent food vendors and, consequentially, satisfied revellers.

Whilst the site of the festival grew to a record size this year, the capacity remained the same, meaning that congestion was very rare and it was easy to get about and experience the vast amount of on-site attractions. This fact in itself shows the organisers' desire to ensure festivalgoer satisfaction ahead of boosting profits.

The summer of 2011 saw the world turn a bit grim due to a maelstrom of riots, dictators and financial woe, but anyone lucky enough to have escaped to the Isle of Wight in the dying moments of this year's festival season will have been reminded that being riotous doesn't mean trashing stuff, that DJs are the only dictators worth listening to and that money doesn't mean shit when you're dressed as a skeleton dancing to The Cure.



SERIOUS SAM BARRETT AND THE PINE HILL HAINTS.

**SPLIT EP.
YADIG? RECORDS.**

REVIEWER – SAM WALBY.

Leeds-based singer songwriter Serious Sam Barrett has teamed up with Alabama country outfit the Pine Hill Haints to record a limited edition split 10" ahead of the release of his upcoming second album. Complete with signed, hand screen printed sleeve, this is an attractive package containing four tracks of authentic country, bluegrass and blues and also comes with an accompanying CD.

Barrett's first contribution is 'Rock 'n' Roll Heart', a heartbroken lament about love lost and finding solace in his favourite songs: "So I put on some Jerry Lee / It took away the pain / And I felt like I was walking the streets of Tennessee again". Based around an accomplished guitar line with a bluesy strum-pick pattern, the track has a carefree, melodic construction and the vocals remind me a little of Van Morrison. His second offering 'Truckstop Sunrise' is somewhat reminiscent of Charlie Parr or the Tallest Man on Earth's self-titled EP, containing a kind of vitality and optimism that I sometimes feel is lacking from contemporary singer songwriters.



ROOTS MANUVA.

**4EVEREVOLUTION.
BIG DADA.**

REVIEWER – IMOGEN DECORDOVA.

Every year we have the predictable furore surrounding the purpose of the MOBOs - that's the Music of Black Origin Awards to those who don't take too kindly to acronyms. The whole point of the awards is called into question as the complexion of most of those nominated slides towards the paler end of the spectrum and more of the music gets the club pop overhaul courtesy of Calvin Harris, David Guetta and fellow audio prostitute Pitbull. I'm not averse to a bit of latino reggaeton and some Daddy Yankee, but this euro club chart invasion has got to stop somewhere. I digress.

Far be it for anyone to complain about the purity of 'black culture' or the supposed evolution of music of black origin as opposed to the dilution of it. Does the term really have any relevance at all if the folks making this music are all the colours of the rainbow? Again, I digress.

Rodney Smith's latest gift to the world is a mish-mash of electro, 'wonky reggae', garage, hip hop and funk, which despite this description doesn't really slot into what one's neatly-formed preconceptions of black and British music might be. Having confessed to being more about the subtleties in his music these days, his 'Witness the Fitness' on this album comes in the guise of a none-too-subtle dancefloor number. Those who haven't heard the radio edit of the Toddla T collab 'Watch Me Dance' have obviously been living under a very accommodating rock this summer. Working some 80s synths and syncopated claps, the track fits well with Smith's off-key and purposefully lazy delivery.



BOTANY.

**FEELING TODAY.
WESTERN VINYL.**

REVIEWER – JACK SCOURFIELD.

The press release for Botany's **Feeling Today** EP claims, as such accompanying info sheets are prone to do, that this is a record that, "draws upon many a genre but settles in none". It wouldn't surprise me if the PR for Jedward's 2010 opus **Planet Jedward** also laid claim to being an indefinable genre-spanning enigma, as using such a turn of phrase is a handy way of slacking off from actually labelling a release with any kind of meaningful description, while making both the writer and the artist seem like a bit of a clever clogs in the process. The trouble is that when you don't lazily categorize something as 'uncategorisable' before tossing your pen down to kick back and gurgle along to Lee Nelson's Well Good Show, you start having to think of names for the pigeon-holes that you feel a song belongs in, and this is when tags such as 'post-dubstep', 'witch house' and - remember this old favourite? - 'nu rave' start to rear their ugly heads.

Botany's music would probably fall under the umbrella term 'chillwave', a now well-established but still ridiculously named genre, but after a while of listening to this EP you start to wonder whether it hails from a world where they don't even bother with such nuisances as words, and certainly not crudely fashioned genre names. To my mind the only possible ways of conjuring up such ethereal delicacies is to either barter at great length with cherubs, or hire some kind of well-meaning, hazy electronica-orientated Freddy Krueger type character to carefully pluck them from the world of dreams.

Teebs, Boards of Canada and 'Pause'-era Four Tet clearly got together at some point and decided that it should be Botany's duty to don the stripy red and black jumper and fedora, and harvest the most sparkling of gems from Dreamworld. The EP's opening track 'Feeling Today' is a gently ebbing and flowing chorale as interpreted by a Disney fairy, with glistening arpeggios swirling over a comfortably patient throb, while 'Minnow Theme' feels like an eavesdrop in on a celestial production line, steady stamps and whirrs interspersed with distant snatches of blissful harmonising. 'Waterparker' begins with an excitedly jumbled rush of digital chatter, before emerging into a whirl of bright colours accompanied by a nostalgically pre-electronica drum beat.

'Bennefactress' dips the record into a more contemplative mood, before closer 'Agave' wishes you goodnight and good luck with the sound of muffled boogie softly seeping up from the final throes of an otherworldly subterranean party. This is an EP that doesn't so much "draw upon many a genre but settles in none", but rather "draws upon many a realm, and settles in this one". They'll be saying that about Planet Jedward as well one day, you mark my words.



VARIOUS ARTISTS.

**CLUB60 SINGLES CLUB NO 1.
CLUB 60 MUSIC.**

REVIEWER – HERBERT SODEN.

Moving swiftly on, we have 'Fridge' by Black Cat, White Cat, who play competent bluesy rock. Am I the detecting a pattern here? As with all of the bands on this single, I can't fault the musicianship, but I feel that atavistic homage is no substitute for new ideas.

The last track is 'Doors' by Michael Eden, a soporific and wistful track in the sad breakup school of song writing. I don't usually pay much attention to this kind of music, but as it marks such a huge departure from the rest of the single I am forced to take notice. In this track we have a nice whooshing backdrop, gentle melodic guitars and vocals that are pitched at just the right level.

If blues-tinged rock tinged with melodic singer songwriter elements is your thing then you will probably enjoy this release. The vinyl pressing is strictly limited, so pick it up while stocks last.

MOGWAI.

HARDCORE WILL NEVER DIE.

INTERVIEW BY SAM WALBY.

Mogwai released their first album **Mogwai Young Team** in 1997. Hailing from Glasgow, the five-piece have carved out a considerable niche in the music world with their moody, dynamic approach to instrumental rock over the last 15 years. More recently they have contributed to the soundtracks for **Zidane: A 21st Century Portrait** and **The Fountain** by Darren Aronovsky, which incidentally is a batshit crazy film that you should probably watch.

Their newest full-length effort, **Hardcore Will Never Die, But You Will**, is their seventh studio album, released on their own Rock Action label, and has been followed up with a world tour and a new EP entitled **Earth Division**. I spoke to guitarist and keyboard player Barry Burns last month.

How is the tour going so far? Where have you been and what has the reception been like?

We've been around the globe since January this year and we won't be stopping until next January or thereabouts, even going to Australia for one concert. It's gone really well but if I am honest, I would very much love to spend some more time at home as it's getting quite tough to be away continuously. There's still a lot more to do, but the audiences have been mostly excellent (and a wee bit bigger).

Did anything in particular inspire your change in direction for this new EP, Earth Division?

Actually they are just songs that didn't fit onto the album during the recording session last year, so nothing radically different from then. They were written in the same way as songs for the album were. They kind of sound more like the 'Singing Mountain' piece we did for [artist and co-creator of Zidane] Douglas Gordon.

Were there any particular inspirations behind the material?

Not anything that I could name. I think a lot of inspiration can come from a bunch of things that you might not notice at the time.

I've heard good things about End of the Road Festival. Are you looking forward to playing? Which other festivals are you doing this year?

Yes, looks like one of the better festivals we've played this year and we've played plenty so far. We've been to Japan, France, Germany, Switzerland, Spain and more, plus we have Ireland, UK, Portugal and Scandinavia coming up too.

How has the band evolved since its inception and are you surprised at reaching album number seven?

It's a daily miracle that we have so many albums. I pity the general public having to put up with us for an eternity. We've evolved and become better musicians in some ways, but in other ways not so much. I think we may need liver transplants soon.

Your song titles can be pretty enigmatic, comic even. Do you place much stock in them, or are they there to offer a bit of light relief?

Well, all those minor chords need a bit of levity sometimes so the titles help with that. They don't mean anything but try telling that to certain interviewers who just don't believe us!

Tell us about the live visuals that accompany your gigs and what you are hoping to achieve with them.

We have a few video projections for certain songs and to be honest I would like some more because it takes the focus off of us. We're not one of those jump-around type bands so it helps to distract from what could be seen as a pretty boring visual thing.

I saw Errors play in Sheffield a few months ago. What made you sign them to Rock Action?

Good band that we liked who didn't have a label. Bingo. It's as easy as that.

Which bands/musicians signed to the label should we keep our ears open for?

Oh man, all of them! They are all pretty amazing artists. I am looking forward to hearing some new Errors songs soon though.

How is the Rock Action label going in general? What releases do you have upcoming?

Good. It's nice for Mogwai to be on there now too. We have a Remember Remember album at the end of September which is utterly fantastic and we recently released the Blanck Mass record (Ben from Fuck Buttons' new project).

Have you preferred releasing Mogwai's material on Rock Action? Is it a lot more work for you guys?

Yes, it's definitely a nice feeling to have done this [recent release] on R.A. We have one, sometimes two people at the office working full-time, so we don't have to do too much. Well, I don't at least.

Is there any news on how much stock you lost in the fire at the PIAS distribution centre in August?

It's a real downer actually. I would like the total scumbag fuckwits who did it to die slowly of the worst ass diseases imaginable. They were probably after some Sony PS3s and didn't realise they were helping destroy the careers of many young and not so well known bands. I despise them. Too strong?

Do you have any plans to do more soundtrack work in the vein of Zidane?

Yes, hopefully something like that will happen next year depending on our mental and physical health at the end of this tour.

Can you tell us more?

Actually no! The details are very thin on the ground but we are confident that it will happen next year.

How did you hook up with Sub Pop?

I actually can't remember, but I am really pleased that we got together with them. All going very smoothly in that department since last year. Very good people.

Do you have any tips for new bands trying to make their mark?

Tour more than you think you can manage and then a bit more on top. It really helps, even if your band sucks.

Is your independence important to you as a band? Not just in a creative sense, but in all senses.

We've never known any other way as we've kind of always had 100% creative control but it is very important.

What are you listening to at the moment?

Adam and Joe's podcasts on a daily basis and just reading a bunch of books on my Kindle, which is the best thing I own, I think. Been watching a lot of HBO stuff too. It's great to lose yourself on those long journeys.

mogwai.co.uk

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LIVE & KICKING

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SAT 1ST OCT - E15 ADV - 7PM * TERRORVISION + THE BREAKDOWNS (MAIN ROOM SHOW) SAT 1ST OCT - E8 ADV - 7PM * LAHANNYA + DYONISIS + ACHILLA (ROOM 3 SHOW) SUN 2ND OCT - E5 ADV - 7PM * LAFARO + SUPPORT MON 3RD OCT - E5 ADV - 7PM * THE OCEAN BETWEEN US + THE MASK OF VIRTUE + FAIRING HER DEMISE + AS TITANS FALL + OUR PORTRAITS IN BLACK FRI 7TH OCT - E17 ADV - 7PM * VNV NATION + SOLAR FRAYE SAT 8TH OCT - E5 ADV - 7PM * DARKE HORSE + SUPPORT SUN 9TH OCT - E10 ADV - 7PM * PANIC ROOM + DAVID R BLACK MON 10TH OCT - E17.50 ADV - 7PM * THE HUMANS FEATURING TOYAH WILCOX, BILL REFLIN, CHRIS WONG	FRI 14TH OCT - E10 ADV - 7PM * MIKE TRAMP & THE ROCK N ROLL CIRCUZ + CRIMES OF PASSION SAT 15TH OCT - E7 ADV - 7PM * ARTERY CIVILISATION ALBUM LAUNCH + THE SILENT AGE MON 17TH OCT - E5 ADV - 7PM * SILENT SCREAMS + RELEASE THE KRAKEN + MINERVA + BORN OF WOLVES SAT 22ND OCT - E5 ADV - 7PM * NEW RIOT + FIVE MINUTE LIMIT + SEARCHING 4 EVIDENCE + WE DIG FOR FIRE MON 24TH OCT - E8 ADV - 7PM * ROYAL REPUBLIC + TRACER TUE 25TH OCT - E6 ADV - 7.30PM * ROYAL REPUBLIC @ THE WELL, LEEDS + TRACER TUE 25TH OCT - E15 ADV - 8PM * SOIL / PUDDLE OF MUDD + DEAR SUPERSTAR + VERSES WED 26TH OCT - E10 ADV - 7PM * VOLBEAT + BLACK SPIDERS
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COMING SOON

- 06/11 - FAIR TO MIDLAND
- 07/11 - CHINA SHOP BULL
- 10/11 - TURSIAS
- 14/11 - MADINA LAKE
- 15/11 - ARICANE ROOTS / 22
- 15/11 - DEVIN TOWNSEND
- 17/11 - THE VIRGINMAIDS
- 18/11 - HAWK EYES / TURBOWOLF
- 19/11 - THE DWARVES
- 21/11 - MORRID ANGEL
- 25/11 - NORTHHERN OAK
- 26/11 - THE DOGS D'AMOUR
- 28/11 - EXIT TEN
- 01/12 - TYKETTO
- 02/12 - LITTLE CAESAR
- 03/12 - THE SWELLERS
- 04/12 - THE QUIREBOYS
- 08/12 - ZEBRAHEAD
- 09/12 - EVERY TIME I DIE
- 10/12 - MANNING
- 11/12 - TITLE FIGHT
- 12/12 - RED JUMPSUIT APPARATUS
- 17/12 - AVENUES & ALLIWAYS
- 19/01 - THE BLACK DANIELA MURDER
- 08/03 - NAME
- 08/03 - KILLING JOKE
- 10/03 - PAUL MENDEL BAND
- 07 & 08/04 - RESISTANCE FESTIVAL 2012

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SAT 1ST OCT
ALL THE YOUNG
GOLDSOUL + THE MONDAY CLUB

MON 3RD OCT
YOUNG LEGIONNAIRE
STEEL TREES + WOODERSON

THU 6TH OCT
ART BRUT
THIS MANY BOYFRIENDS

FRI 7TH OCT / HBP PRESENTS...

LIKELY LADS

GAZELLES + LITTLE CRAZY + THE INSIDE JOB + THIS RED ROCK

SAT 8TH OCT / YM PROMOTIONS PRESENTS...
THE WINNEBAGO'S
 LED TANGO + SLIVER + KI-ADI-MUNDI

WED 12TH OCT / PLUG LIVE PRESENTS AT THE FORUM
CAVE PAINTING
PUZZLES

SAT 15TH OCT / SOUNDCLASH PRESENTS...
MATIC MOUTH
 SOUR CHERRY + KONCRETE MICKSTA + RADIO FIRE

MON 17TH OCT
BEN HOWARD
MICHAEL CASSIDY

WED 19TH OCT
STIFF LITTLE FINGERS
THE F**KWITS

WED 19TH OCT / PLUG LIVE PRESENTS AT THE FORUM
POLARSETS

FRI 21ST OCT
WRETCH 32
LOICK ESSIEU

SAT 22ND OCT
JON ALLEN
EMILY BAKER

WED 26TH NOV / PLUG LIVE PRESENTS AT THE FORUM
VISIONS OF TREES
 GLISTERING PELT

FRI 28TH OCT
SCOTT MATTHEWS
SAM BROOKES

SAT 29TH OCT / SOUNDCLASH PRESENTS...
THE MONICANS
MON 31ST OCT

LEFT AJAR
WED 2ND NOV / FUTURESOUND PRESENTS...
SCROOBIES DIP

THUR 3RD NOV
MAVERICK SABRE

SAT 5TH NOV / VOX SHEFFIELD PRESENTS...
'MINDSTOCK'
SAT 6TH NOV / PLUG LIVE PRESENTS AT THE HARLEY

AIRSHIP
WED 9TH NOV
MAGAZINE

VINTAGE TROUBLE

SAT 12TH NOV / SOUNDCLASH PRESENTS...
THE 48K'S

WED 16TH NOV
BATTLES
WALLS

FRI 18TH NOV
RED SNAPPER
KING CAPISCE

WED 23RD NOV / PLUG LIVE PRESENTS AT THE FORUM
TROUMACA
MON 28TH NOV / PLUG LIVE PRESENTS AT THE HARBOR

COLOURMUSIC
WED 30TH NOV / PLUG LIVE PRESENTS AT THE FORUM
ELLEN AND THE ESCAPADES

**ELLEN AND
EARLY CARTOGRAPHERS**
SAT 3RD DEC
WIDE

WIRE
TALK NORMAL
WED 7TH DEC
HAWKWIND

THUR 8TH DEC
THE LEMONHEADS

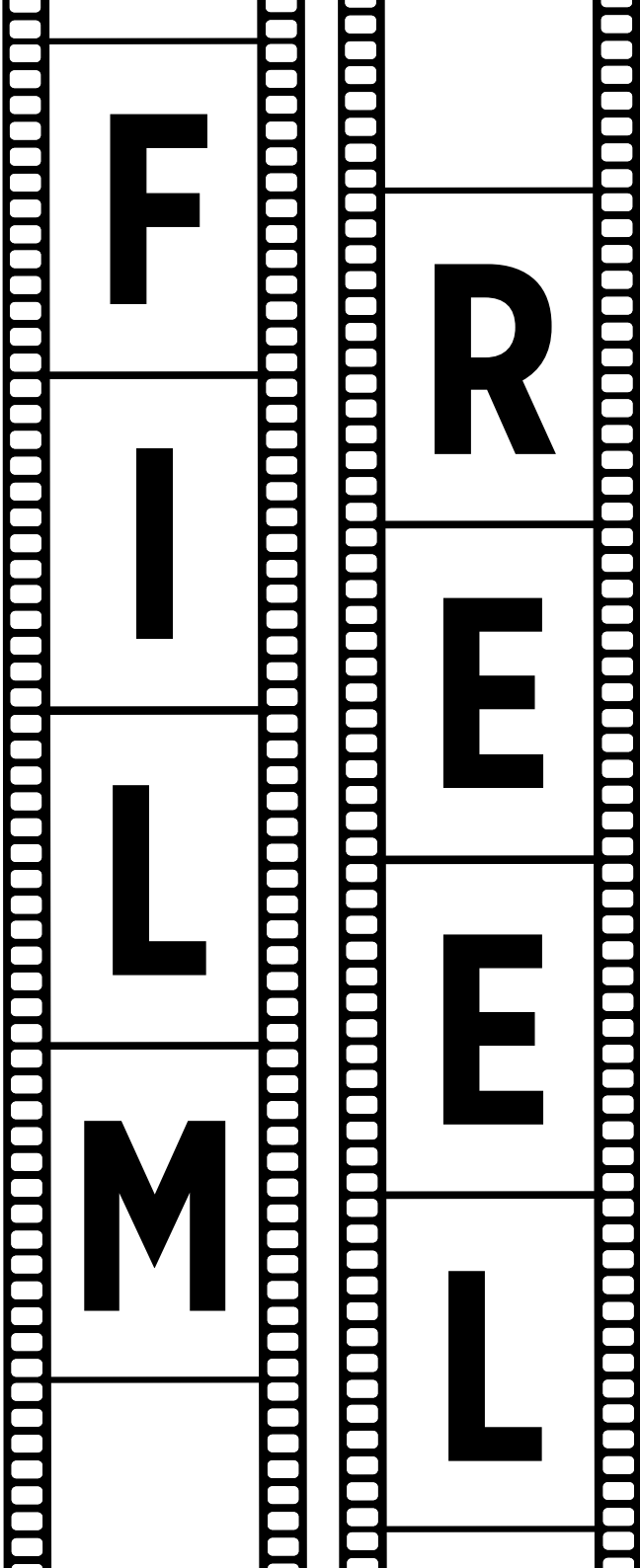
FRI 9TH DEC
ALOE BLACC
SAT 10TH DEC / SOUNDCLASH PRESENTS...

LANCASHIRE HOTPOTS
 CLENCH + KIERAN CASSERLY
 FRI 16TH DEC
 7.30PM - 10.30PM

PLAYGROUND MAFIA
STARLINGS + SEACHING 4 EVIDENCE + STRIPEY JACK + CULPRITS + ONE WAY
WED 14TH DEC
THE 24W DOCTORS

THE SAW DOCTORS
SAT 17TH DEC
ION WINDLE

SUN WINDLE
FRI 24TH FEB
LIMEHOUSE LIZZY



THE BAD, THE WORSE AND THE WORST.

ALEX KEEGAN.

Over the last couple of months, a number of outspoken voices amongst the cinematic community have come out claiming that commercial filmmakers frequently undermine, patronise and belittle their audiences.

Case study one – at the Venice Film Festival last month, Colin Firth claimed the film industry underestimates audiences’ intelligence and capacity for concentration in response to questions asking whether his new thriller **Tinker Tailor Soldier Spy**, would be a hit given its intricate plot. Case study two – much-loved critic Mark Kermode recently wrote an article vilifying those big-budget producers who cynically ignore intellectual filmmaking, citing **Inception** as an example of a blockbuster that can bring in crowds without alienating them. Case study three – **The Inbetweeners Movie**, a film so simple and banal that its assured place at the top of the box office almost certainly signals the de-evolution of today’s youth (and yes, I’ve actually seen it - it’s every bit as delinquent and generic as predicted).

But despite this criticism, there is one thing we can thank those four sex-starved teens for and that’s the toppling of their American competition in the UK market, most notably **Cowboys and Aliens**, which made a measly £1.8 million in its opening weekend. Nothing fills me with more joy than seeing an overly marketed, Hollywood pyrotechnics show be crushed by ‘one of our very own’ (spare me this moment of unfashionable patriotism – the opportunity is too rare). It is equally joyous when a film with no beneficial purpose to its audience or society manages to destroy itself, without aid, prompt or competition from another picture. I’m talking about those films that unintentionally defy logic, wholeheartedly embrace cliché or are manufactured as a marketable commodity.

Before we digress into the past, one film released this year deserves a mention. Suitably named **The Worst Movie Ever!** - no, seriously - an ingenious mix of ‘robot aliens, angst-ridden teens, cleavage-wielding soul takers, dark overlords, pregnant 14-year-old cougars, macho scientists and Santa Claus couldn’t stop this confused character cocktail from only bringing in \$11 at the box office, meaning only one person saw it. But let us now turn our gaze to one of those stars that refuses to let integrity or talent hamper his one-man quest to make the most unprofitable, terrible films in cinema history. That man is Kevin Costner.

Having reached a career high with **The Untouchables**, poor Kevin couldn’t face competing with his own high standards. Instead he opted to spend the next decade starring in some of the most uneconomical and poorly received films in history. This mayhem culminated in 1997, when Warner Bros allowed Costner to direct himself in the mawkish post-apocalyptic **The Postman**, brilliantly satirised in The Simpsons as Costner, a former postman, aimlessly wandering around a desert delivering people suspect packages that contain the concept of ‘hope’.

The film lost \$62 million at the box office and Costner’s career has been doomed to failure ever since.

From the ambitiously inadequate to the religiously misguided – Mitsu Haru Ishii to be exact, keen follower of South Korea’s Unification Church and aspiring film producer. After receiving a message from God and deciding against Jesus and Elvis biopics, Ishii chose to focus on American General Douglas MacArthur and the plight of the Korean people under his stern control during the war of the 50s in **Inchon**. Ishii’s strategy was fairly questionable. First he secured a \$46 million budget from the leader of his church. Then he hired down-and-out actor Laurence Olivier to play the lead role for \$1 million, convinced the US Department of Defense to aid the filming – a collaboration which resulted in mass protests - and felt the need to completely fictionalise the apparent factual-grounding of the film. He chose to lead the marketing campaign by quoting the long-deceased General MacArthur, supposedly contacted through a psychic, who gave his full consent to the making of the film and endorsed its authenticity. The list of insane film production techniques is endless and as a result it made less than \$2 million at the box office, becoming one of the biggest financial failures in film history.

Another trend in this ill-fated world of flops is those films that anticipate future blockbuster fads. Perhaps the most tragic of all of these unintentional trendsetters is **Delgo**, a film ten years in the making and with a budget of \$40 million. The story tells of a group of friends who try to stop a feud between two clans on their planet motivated by diminished environmental resources. It is an animation featuring strange-looking protagonists, flying beasts and levitating platforms in the clouds. The production was often hampered as the producers ‘leaked’ some of the dailies during the film’s production. Rather than creating a suitable amount of buzz among the paying public, it caught the attention of members of the industry, who used the provisional film clips to poach talent from the film’s production team. Talk about shooting yourself in the foot. Weeks before its release, Delgo was unlucky enough to be obscured and overshadowed by the first teaser trailers for the momentous **Avatar**, which offered all the appealing features of Delgo plus ‘revolutionary’ 3D and a gargantuan marketing budget. There was no competition and the rest, they say, is history.

TAGLINES.

JOÃO PAULO SIMÕES.

No art form has associated itself more with the notion of entertainment than film. Tragic, isn’t it? But let’s not worry about the restrictions or consequences of that for the moment. In fact, don’t worry about the possibility of this being a personal rant masquerading as an article either.

For the sake of your own entertainment, let’s even buy into the whole ‘film as product’ business. If films are products that require ever more inventive marketing strategies to guarantee consumption and profit, taglines are the equivalent of ‘what it says on the tin’. As such, they can often be misleading, hilarious or spot-on in their concise description of what a film offers.

Taglines have been around for many decades. They have predominantly been favoured by big Hollywood Studios as opposed to the European approach which, as a rule, tends to rely more on the name of a director or a particular actor to draw the crowds in. However, their influence is by now widespread and a lot of countries that aspire to the Hollywood industry standard use them profusely.

For the sake of economy, I’m choosing to split this appreciation of the art of labelling your product correctly into three main categories: those that resonate as true to every one of us, the (un)intentionally hilarious kind and the absolutely obscure. You will find that the boundaries of such categories will, on occasion, blur slightly. Still, we’re all individuals, with our own associations and preferences. What is cheesy for me may be remarkably poignant for you or plain tedious for somebody else. This is where contradiction becomes most apparent: how the perception of such a commercial device – conceived to ‘feed the masses’ equally – remains ultimately subjective.

So here we go, in chronological order yet informed with all my bias, obsession and personal taste...

THE RESONANT:

“The strangest story ever conceived by man.” – King Kong (1933)

“Still the fairest of them all!” – Snow White and the Seven Dwarves (1937)

“He had to find her...he had to find her.” – The Searchers (1956)

“Check in. Relax. Take a shower.” - Psycho (1960)

“How did they ever make a movie of Lolita?” – Lolita (1962)

“Sister, sister, oh so fair, why is there blood all over your hair?” – What Ever Happened to Baby Jane? (1962)

“...and remember, the next scream you hear may be your own!” – The Birds (1963)

“From the book that couldn’t be written comes the motion picture that couldn’t be made!” – Myra Breckenridge (1970)

“To avoid fainting, keep repeating ‘It’s only a movie...It’s only a movie...’” – Last House on the Left (1972)

“On every street in every city, there’s a nobody who dreams of being a somebody.” – Taxi Driver (1976)

“The Only Thing More Terrifying Than The Last 12 Minutes Of This Film Are The First 92.” – Suspiria (1977)

“In space no one can hear you scream.” – Alien (1979)

“Exterminate all rational thought.” – Naked Lunch (1991)

“We Dare You to Say His Name Five Times.” – Candyman (1992)

“The future is history.” – Twelve Monkeys (1995)

“Everyone has one special thing.” – Boogie Nights (1997)

“Believe Everything Except Your Eyes.” – Snake Eyes (1998)

“Be All That Someone Else Can Be.” – Being John Malkovich (1999)

“Things fall down. People look up. And when it rains, it pours.” – Magnolia (1999)

“Family isn’t a word. It’s a sentence.” – The Royal Tenenbaums (2001)

THE HILARIOUS:

“From the Moment they met it was Murder!” – Double Indemnity (1944)

“The greatest adventure a man ever lived...with a woman!” – The African Queen (1951)

“The story of a blonde who wanted to go places, and a brute who got her there - the hard way!” – The Bad and the Beautiful (1952)

“I changed my sex!” – Glen or Glenda? (1953)

“You don’t assign him to murder cases. You just turn him loose.” – Dirty Harry (1971)

“How far does a girl have to go to untangle her tingle?” – Deep Throat (1972)

“He’s got a plan to stick it to the Man!” – Super Fly (1972)

“A film that could only be made in South America, where life is CHEAP!” – Snuff (1976)

“You like to watch, don’t you?” – Sliver (1993)

“Movies were his passion. Women were his inspiration. Angora sweaters were his weakness.” – Ed Wood (1994)

“From the brother of the director of Ghost.” – Naked Gun 33 1/3: The Final Insult (1994)

“Evil comes with strings attached.” – Pinocchio’s Revenge (1996)

“The coast is toast.” – Volcano (1997)

“Earth. It was fun while it lasted.” – Armageddon (1998)

“Her life was in their hands. Now her toe is in the mail.” – The Big Lebowski (1998)

“Part mystery. Part thriller. Parts missing.” – Lake Placid (1999)

“You Won’t Believe Your Eye.” – Monsters, Inc (2001)

THE OBSCURE:

“A Psycho-Sexadelic Horror Freakout!” – Vampiros Lesbos (1971)

“Changed By God and Man... Into a Priestess of Violence!” – Flavia, The Heretic (1974)

“Very unnatural women...” – Vampyres (1975)

“The windows look out onto hell...a view that will take your breath away...permanently!” – Don’t Ride On Late Night Trains (1975)

“An apocalyptic Alice in Wonderland!” – Black Moon (1975)

“When the wine flows, the terror begins...” – The Grapes of Death (1978)

“Who’s seducing? Who’s being seduced? Who’s the one driving? Who’s sitting in the dead man’s seat?” – Dead Man’s Seat (1984)

“When one journey ends... And another begins...” – Stolen Waters & Other Absences (2007)

JOÃO PAULO SIMÕES IS A PORTUGUESE FILMMAKER LIVING AND WORKING INDEPENDENTLY IN SHEFFIELD. HIS WORKS INCLUDE ANTLERS OF REASON AND AN ARRAY OF MUSIC VIDEOS AND DOCUMENTARIES. VISIT CAPTURAFILMES.BLOGSPOT.COM.

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Carol
Ann Duffy
FLASH!
LAUREATE



Sat 15 Oct.
Hugh Fearnley-
Whittingstall
FLASH!
OF VEG



Thurs 13 Oct.
Al Humphreys,
Round the
World by Bike
FLASH!
BIKE RIDE



Wed 19 Oct.
Big Bag
of Boom
FLASH!
OF FUNNY



Thurs 3 Nov.
Human
& Friends
FLASH!
OF INSPIRATION

FLASH!
AT A
GLANCE

SAT 01 OCT. Howard Marks - FLASH! Under surveillance
WED 05 OCT. Mike Hulme - FLASH! of Environment
SAT 08 OCT. International Intro Fiesta - FLASH! of Fiesta
SUN 09 OCT. Ian McMillan, Paul Bentley and Jonathan Davidson - FLASH! of Verse
MON 10 OCT. THE END: Hitler's Germany - FLASH! Knight
THURS 11 OCT. Imagination Gaming Games Night - FLASH! Fantastic
SAT 15 OCT. The King's Speech - FLASH! of Therapy
MON 17 OCT. Jon Ronson - The Psychopath Test - FLASH! of Madness
THURS 20 OCT. Jeremy Paxman - FLASH! of Ruling The World
SUN 23 OCT. Mine's a Double - FLASH! Performance
MON 24 OCT. Gary Younge - FLASH! of Identity
TUE 25 OCT. Wendy Cope - FLASH! of Warmth
THURS 27 OCT. Rob Brydon - FLASH! of Success
SAT 29 OCT. Sir Roy Strong - FLASH! of Vision
MON 31 OCT. Jeanette Winterson OBE - FLASH! of Normal
THURS 10 NOV. Science Junkies - FLASH! Brainwaves
SAT 19 NOV. International Food Evening - FLASH! of International
THURS 24 NOV. Pecha Kucha Sheffield - FLASH! of 20x20
MON 28 NOV. Andy Kirkpatrick: Cold Wars - FLASH! of Gut-wrenching
THURS 01 DEC. Steve Edge - FLASH! Edge

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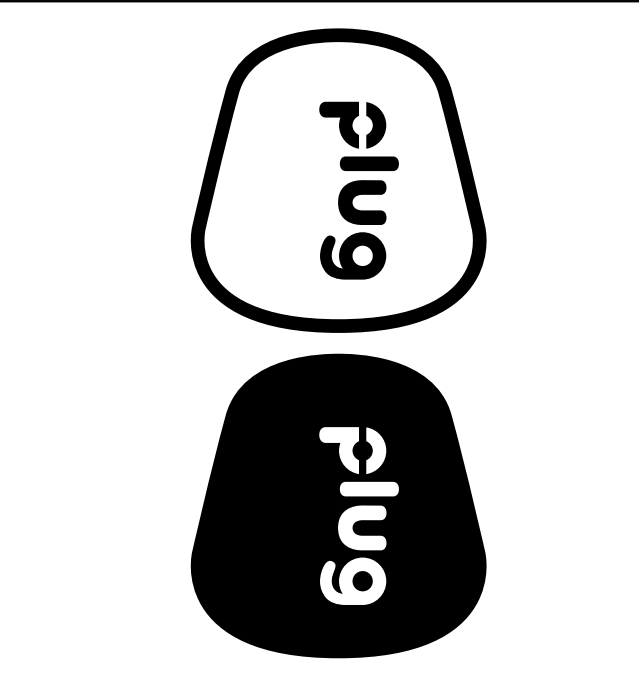
Advert based on a composition by Kurt Schwitters, one of many pioneers of modern typography, from the 1920s.
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Number 2 of a series of typographical adverts for Origin Broadband to be put on show at a later date.

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MIXED IN SHEFFIELD / DAN SANE

MiS, as it is affectionately know across the seven hills, is widely respected as one of Sheffield's most prominent independent labels following the success of its first two releases, which showcase the talent and diversity to be found in the city when looking that bit deeper into the various scenes. The next chapter will see MiS darling Sarah Mac set for stardom as she features on ITV's Rule Britannia next month. But we'll be going into greater depth on this in next month's mag. This month we're here to talk about Sheffield's latest warehouse venue, Dan Sane.

Mr Liam O'shea, the man behind MiS, has joined forces with Nyra of VIVA Music and Dan Metcalf of All Points North to create a venue for new musical talent, live art and dance to be enjoyed in a conducive environment.

Named after the great Memphis jazz and blues man, Dan Sane takes inspiration from the Berlin warehouse party scene and continues the theme of naming venues after the greats of the 20s and 30s, like Robert Johnson and Harry Klein. The building itself has elements of Berlin club décor, with added South Yorkshire character and is a truly unique venue for the city. This ethos of individuality and quality extends into the booking policy, with acts like Levon Vincent and Dinky already booked.

With the place being born specifically to host monthly night Downlo, Dan Sane is not run like a club. It doesn't have daily takings and profit margins, and so carries an amazing air of freedom which sets the tone for a great and unpretentious night out.

On 28th September Downlo reached its first birthday and so celebrated in style with the aforementioned banger headlined by Dinky. They are set to follow this with more intriguing and horizon-broadening acts each month.

Find out more by checking Facebook regularly, as this lot suffer no inertia.

THE PLUG. MATILDA STREET. THE-PLUG.COM.

The Plug has been a bit overlooked in recent issues of Now Then, but only on the assumption that it is usually a destination of choice for most readers on any given month. Located in the centre of town on Matilda Street, the Plug is a versatile venue with three rooms hosting regular events like Planet Zogg, Covert, Shuffle and Detonate. They also put on live gigs throughout the week, with local bands mixing with internationally touring acts.

Here a few prime bookings coming up in the next couple of months.

Mindstock.
5th November.
£9.
Featuring the Electric Soft Parade, 7 Black Tentacles, the Tivoli, Matinee Hype and Dr Syntax, Projectionists, Screaming Maldini, Carl Woodfood and Andy Duxfield.

Battles.
16th November.
£12.50.
Support from Walls.

Red Snapper.
18th November.
£10.
Support from King Capisce.

James Zabiela.
10th December.
£6.
Techno, house and breakbeat DJ extraordinaire takes on the Plug for one night only, supported by a set from young producer Midland.

SCULPTURED EARTH. 01433 620634. 07837 115290. SCUPTUREDEARTH.CO.UK

From earth-sculpter, landscaper and aspiring journeyman Dan Butlin comes Sculptured Earth, an ethical company committed to creating low-maintenance green spaces.

A professional drystone waller of five years both here and abroad, Dan and new partner Scott have an admirable vision of using traditional crafts and methods of working with the land, rather than trying to tame it.

The team use locally-sourced and reclaimed materials upon request and produce work to the highest standard while keeping their prices affordable, as well as showing the gardeners of tomorrow how you can create and sustain beautiful spaces with minimal disruption to the natural ecosystem. Give them a call and bring some countryside into your part of town.

INDEPENDENT'S DAY. S11 INDEPENDENTS.

Last month a host of independent traders joined forces to stage the first S11 Fashion Fundraiser, bringing in over £1,500 for the Cavendish Cancer Care Centre and Cash for Kids. The event was held at Studio 557 on Ecclesall Road and hosted 150 lucky ladies sitting at the edge of Sheffield's most exclusive catwalk. With eight local businesses showcasing autumn/winter '11 trends, they were served champagne and canapés by a topless Ian Philips from Hunky Waiters. Nice.

Helen Connelly, organiser and owner of Squirts Designer Childrenswear, said: "The S11 Fashion Fundraiser was a phenomenal success and I'm so pleased we exceeded our target of raising £1,000!" Here's to many more.

FAVOURITES.

OUR PICK OF THE BUNCH.

VICTORIA MADE. 07971427998. HELLO@VICTORIAMADE.COM VICTORIAMADE.COM

A cake's a cake's a cake, right? Wrong. Based in Sheffield but able to deliver to all surrounding regions, Victoria Watkin Jones creates incredibly ornate homemade cakes. A true specialist in wedding cakes, Victoria can also cater for practically any occasion that warrants a cake with that extra touch of class.

The range of options is highly impressive, with larger cakes and specialist designs created specifically for the cutting ceremony, right through to luxury cup cakes made to your specification. Victoria is also now taking orders for the Christmas period, so get in touch.

SLAM BAM, THANK YOU MA'AM. 24TH OCTOBER. 9PM. THE SHOEBOX, RIVERSIDE CAFE.

Local performance poet Sarah Thomasin is teaming up with LaDIYfest Sheffield to bring you Sheffield's first all-female poetry slam. Why all women? Well, LaDIYfest is all about celebrating women's creativity and talent and while there are a lot of women poets out there, performance poetry has a tendency to be male-dominated.

The night will also feature a set from renowned international performance poet Paula Varjack in her debut visit to Sheffield. Poetic ladies should contact Sarah Thomasin at wordgeeksarah@gmail.com. All proceeds to Sheffield Rape Crisis.

THE VINE INN. 160 CEMETERY ROAD. 01142 768920.

The Vine is to be found equidistantly between Ecclesall Road and London Road and has recently enjoyed a shift in paradigm. Now owned by landlord Ricky, the venue has been reborn in earnest. It will no longer simply be your local, as it now offers regular live music, DJs taking centre-stage and late licensing at the weekend, making for a great venue to let your hair down with mates.

Ricky is now also putting drinks offers on each night, along with competition-standard pool tables, a jukebox and what he believes is the best beer garden in Sheffield. There will be an open-entry pool competition every Wednesday netting the winner a sweet thirty quid, so any budding Ronnies out there, get chalking.

BIG BAG OF BOOM. 19TH OCTOBER. 7.30PM. FOUNDRY. NEWARTCLUB.ORG

On 19th October, Flash will host a performance from "the world's funniest dance duo", Tom Roden and Pete Shenton, known collectively as New Art Club. Built from a decade of successful shows, Big Bag of Boom sees the pair amuse with their hodge-podge of set pieces and playful on-stage antics, including country dancing to Heaven 17 and an unorthodox game of peekaboo.

Both Roden and Shenton are accomplished choreographers in their own right, having worked on scores of projects in recent years, so this slice of "sublimely elegant stupidity" should appeal to fans of dance and comedy alike.



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